

SWEDISH NEUTRALITY  
AND  
THE COLD WAR,  
1945 - 1949.

Gerard Aalders



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1945-1949.**

**Gerard Aalders  
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**SWEDISH NEUTRALITY AND THE COLD  
WAR, 1945 - 1949.**

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**FOR LOESKE**





## SWEDISH NEUTRALITY AND THE COLD WAR, 1945 - 1949.

### Introduction.

Why did Sweden stay neutral at the height of the Cold War? Other countries, with a comparable tradition of neutrality, abandoned their old foreign policy because they felt they could secure their national independence only in a pact with Western democracies. Sweden was culturally, politically and economically as much a part of the West as those countries that gave up their neutral status. At certain times there had been vague indications of a slow drifting away from pure neutrality such as the membership of the United Nations, the acceptance of Marshall Aid and last but not least the talks about a Scandinavian Defence Union.

With respect to pure neutrality there were some other questions which aroused the curiosity of the observer: How had Sweden handled the American demands to take part in the US embargo policy against the Soviet Union?

And had Finland played a role in the Swedish decisionmaking? Or the Soviet Union? And how did the Credit and Trade Agreement with the Soviet Union (1946) fit into the picture? Also the atomic bomb (USA:1945; Soviet Union: 1949) had changed the nature of neutrality. A nation might escape direct involvement in a war but is it also able to survive a nuclear war, even if it is not waged within its own borders?

Asking questions is not answering them but the basic condition for finding answers to questions, curiosity, was there. I have, of course, not the slightest illusion that I, after years of research, have found the definitive answers. They simply don't exist. The historical facts do not change but our interpretations certainly do.

At the congress *The Cold War and the Northern Countries* in Odense, Denmark (1984), the Swedish contributor Wilhelm Agrell held a speech with the significant title *Sweden and the cold war. The structure of a neglected field of research.*<sup>1</sup>

Agrell complained that Swedish historians and political scientists seem to have accepted 1945 as a kind of generally adopted limit for their research. Remarkably enough there are several studies about the foreign policy of Sweden in the 1960's and 1970's but about the previous two decades hardly

anything can be found. Not even an actual global review of the pertinent period is available, the last one dating from 1965.<sup>2</sup> Studies dealing with the subjects, taken up in the various chapters of this dissertation, are still very limited. Moreover the few existing studies all have one thing in common: they hardly make use of official Swedish sources and are mainly based on Norwegian<sup>3</sup>, English and US literature as well as on archival material from those countries. The main reason for that situation was due to the inaccessibility of the Swedish archives. Practically all requests for admission were turned down by the Swedish government and researchers seem to have accepted those refusals without much protests.<sup>4</sup>

However, for this dissertation, authorization has been granted to make use of Swedish Foreign Office documents for the first time. Furthermore the private archives of the then Prime Minister Tage Erlander and the then Foreign Minister Östen Undén were opened up for me. The diaries of both statesmen proved to be a rich source of information. Also the archives of all the political parties were made available for my research. I have also been able to do some interviews with contemporaries of which especially those with Tage Erlander have been most illuminating. For a complete review of the consulted archives and interviews is referred to "Sources".

Newspapers and periodicals from the years in question have provided me with information from contemporaries and furnished moreover much background material.

#### **a. Neutrality and Swedish neutrality.<sup>5</sup>**

There is, legally at least, little confusion about the rights and duties of neutral states in wartime: They were laid down at the Hague Convention on Land and Sea Warfare in 1907 and have never been fundamentally changed.<sup>6</sup> We do not deal here with the question if those laws are nowadays out of date.

Neutrals have the right to have their sovereignty and independence respected by the belligerent nations and they have the duty to abstain from participation in conflicts and to exercise impartiality, in treatment, towards the parties of war. The basic rules of the international customary law of neutrality are, summarized, the following:

"(1) A neutral State must abstain from taking sides in the war and

assisting either belligerent and, in matters of discretion, deal impartially with all belligerents.

(2) A neutral State must prevent its territory from being used as base of hostile operations by any belligerent.

(3) A State not participating in a war is entitled to respect by the belligerents of its rights as a neutral Power. It must, however, acquiesce in restrictions which, under the laws of war and neutrality, belligerents are entitled to impose on the relations between their enemies and neutral nationals.

(4) A neutral State, as distinct from a neutralised State, may change its status to one of belligerency. Otherwise the state of neutrality is co-extensive with that of war.

(5) Any violation of the legal duties owned by belligerents and neutral States to one another is a breach of international law and entails the consequences of an international tort."<sup>7</sup>

But neutral states need not prevent their subjects from supplying war materials to the belligerents. "Neutral States are responsible to belligerent States only for their own acts and omissions."<sup>8</sup> Private companies and persons may, at their own risk, associate themselves with the belligerents. State owned companies have not that right. The consequences of that legislation are quite considerable for societies where most companies are privately owned. They are free to trade with the belligerents without violating their own national laws, provided of course that the national law does not explicitly forbid such associations. But the position of a trading neutral citizen with regard to the laws of the distinct warring parties is quite a different one. The Anglo Americans attached enemy character during the Second World War as much to their own subjects in enemy territory or enemy-occupied territory as to foreigners, no matter if they were neutral or enemy nationals.

So it could happen that private Swedish companies and persons were brought to trial in the USA for having traded with Nazi-Germany whereas they were not prosecuted in Sweden.<sup>9</sup>

There are, on the other hand, no rules of international law governing how a neutral country must act in times of peace.

A lot of different terms are used to describe neutrality: no-alignment, non-alignment, non-participation, policy of independence, neutralism, while a Dutch

diplomat called it once, with regard to Sweden a "wait and see policy". No special preference for any of those term is used here.

The historian Barnes<sup>10</sup> has pointed out that with the rise of the Cold War a new situation came into existence and that neutrality therefore is no proper term anymore: it would be preferable to speak of non-alignment which manifests itself in two forms: *negative* and *positive* non-alignment. The former term means anti alliance and non-commitment, the latter implies non-alignment as well but gives the right to exercise and maintain relations with other states, regardless of their position in the Cold War. The relations may not entail entanglement, direct or indirect, in the Cold War associations of those countries. Total non-alignment is in both forms impossible because there is always an ideological, cultural and economical alignment. With regard to Sweden, Barnes rightly remarks:

"Sweden aims at classical neutrality in war and does not pursue a system of 'permanent' or 'total' neutrality in times of peace. Sweden is not a member of any alliance system and in this sense she follows one of the strands contained within negative nonalignment, but Sweden is certainly not uncommitted and identify

herself with one of the Great Powers if only in an economic and cultural sense. Sweden is Westward-oriented and her economic system is decidedly capitalistic but this has not deterred the Swedes from conducting a decisively alliance free policy. Since Sweden is obviously not a member of a Western bloc but is linked to one in so many other fields, it has been mandatory for her foreign policy to be administered in such a manner that her aim of classical neutrality in times of war should appear credible. Credibility of the continuity of Sweden's aims is essential for maintaining its status as a sovereign unit withdrawn from Great Power conflicts. Consequently, a cardinal point of Swedish policy has been to remind the rival power blocs in her international environment that credibility of her policy needs to find its counterpart in the credibility of the rival Power's respect for Sweden's peace-time foreign policy posture."

*Has Sweden a serious chance to stay neutral when it is, or is threatened to be, cut off from oil, vital spare components for its defence system, indispensable raw materials and technology for its industry? Most of it coming from*

the part of the world where its sympathy goes to: the West. Sweden tries to keep the level of her stocks of strategic materials and foreign spare parts as high as possible<sup>11</sup> but running out of stocks is in a situation of war only a matter of time. The question is what choice Sweden will make in the event that she faces such a situation.

The Swedish policy of "non-participation in alliances in peacetime aiming at neutrality in the event of war", as it is officially described, has neither a theoretical nor an ideological base. The guiding principal is pragmatism, dictated by national interest. That is of course nothing new: Already the Athenian historian Thucydides (c.460-c.399 B.C) observed that fact in ancient Greece and the first president of the United States, George Washington, confirmed it two thousand years later when he said that "a small knowledge of human nature will convince us, that, (...) interest is the governing principle (...)." and it has been affirmed by Max Weber in our century when he wrote that interests and not ideas dominate the actions of mankind. In his last speech as Foreign Minister (1962) Undén echoed that opinion: Sweden's foreign policy was in the first and last resort dominated by her own interests. Only they were decisive; its motives were laying - Undén borrowed his words from Nietzsche - beyond Good and Bad (*jenseits von Gut und Böse*.)

All the political parties represented in the Riksdag, the Swedish Parliament, support the policy of non participation in peacetime and neutrality in case of war. Swedish neutrality however is not laid down in the Constitution as for example is the case in Switzerland.

Another characteristic of Sweden's neutrality policy is that it is, contrary to Swiss neutrality, neither guaranteed nor confirmed by any international agreement. Sweden has argued that if neutrality is incorporated in an international agreement and guaranteed by the Great Powers it might create a certain measure of dependence on those powers. The fact that its neutrality is neither laid down in the Constitution nor in an international agreement means, in theory, that the neutral policy can be amended by the government whenever it wishes to do so. But practically such a change is not soon to be expected because this policy has served the country well ever since 1814.<sup>12</sup> Only once since the days of Napoleon did Sweden adhere itself to foreign

powers: an alliance with France and England during the Crimean War (1854-1856).

But Sweden was careful not to join the French-English armies on the battlefields in Russia. The Crimean War had a fortunate implication for the Swedes: A British-France expedition destroyed the Russian fortifications on Åland, "a pistol pointed at the heart of Sweden", and at the Peace Treaty of Paris (1856) the Russians were forbidden to remilitarize the island of Åland.

Sweden escaped being dragged into the both World Wars of this century and that historical experience has become the main force behind the continuation of its policy of neutrality until today. Prime minister Per Albin Hansson got an ovation for his war time foreign policy that, according to his party members, had kept Sweden out of World War II.<sup>13</sup>

It is of course quite disputable that Sweden owes her staying out of those World Wars to her policy of neutrality.

World War II has left far more and deeper traces in the Swedish neutrality consciousness than the first World War, also because of the fact that the war this time had come very close to its own borders. Finland became involved in the war, Norway and Denmark were occupied.

During the war Sweden was governed by a Grand Coalition Government in which all parliamentary parties, except the communist, were represented. Christian G  nther was foreign minister. G  nther was a civil servant and a diplomat. He was no politician and neither was he a member of a political party.

The protection of the Swedish neutrality demands a strong defence and it is precisely that defence that ties Sweden more and more to the West. The air force, navy and army are for their high tech weapon systems, radar and warning systems for a great part dependent on the West. But also Swedish industry cannot exist without making use of Western technologies and raw materials. This still growing dependence on the Western world may in the long run reduce Swedish neutrality to not much more than a formal statement.

Sweden got, after all, involved in the US embargo policy against the East (see chapter 7). Where Sweden stands ideologically has never been a secret. She has her roots in the culture and tradition of the West. The motives for

her neutrality are no secret either and they are very similar to those of other states: national interests. It has absolutely nothing to do with moral or so called "higher principles". If there is any moral guideline it is the kind which was once described by the English philosopher Ken Booth as "the idea of the lesser evil."

### **b. Neutrality and World War II<sup>14</sup>**

The overriding concern for Prime Minister Hansson and his foreign minister was to keep Sweden out of the war. To reach that purpose, Hansson was, if the circumstances demanded so, willing to bend in the wind. Per Albin, as the social democratic cabinet leader generally was called in Sweden, knew that he had the almost unanimous support of the public. He became the fatherfigure who led the country through the dark years.

May 1940 was the most dangerous time for the Swedish independence when English and French troops captured Narvik in Norway and threatened to occupy the iron ore mines in Northern Sweden in order to prevent the export of iron ore to Germany.

External factors, not its policy of neutrality, saved Sweden from direct involvement in the war. Things would probably have run another course if there had not been 4000 German soldiers in Northern Norway to prevent the English and French to enter Swedish territory and if the defeat of the Western Powers in May 1940 at the theatre of war in Europe, with that giving the Germans a free hand in Europe, had not taken place. The *Balance of Power* in Europe, although seriously upset, did not make it a military necessity for the Nazi's to occupy Sweden.

Sweden was much more important to Germany, because of its export of critical raw materials to the Third Reich, than it was to the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, the latter mainly being engaged in improving its defensive positions and restoring for that reason former Russian territory.

The Allies were not really interested in Sweden, or Scandinavia on the whole, in the post May 1940 period, because their main interests lay elsewhere.

Swedish trade with the West declined dramatically after April 9, 1940 when the Nazi's launched their attack on Norway and Denmark. By autumn the Skagerrak, seagate to the West, was closed by a German minefield from

Denmark's most Northern tip to Lindesnes in South Norway. That was about the end of the Swedish trade with the West, only the so called "Gothenburg traffic", which was dependent on the permission from Germany and Great Britain to pass the blockade, was left.<sup>15</sup>

The blockade became an excellent instrument for the Great Powers for extracting concessions because some import materials as oil and certain foodstuffs were absolutely vital for Sweden.

At the other side became *ball bearings*, which were vital for Hitler's war machinery, an important issue in the relations between Sweden and the Allies.

In the given situation there remained for Sweden in fact only one trading partner: Germany. Coal and coke, indispensable for the steel industry, could after the establishment of the Skagerrak blockade no longer be obtained from the usual suppliers in Great Britain, Belgium and Holland. Sweden became almost wholly dependent on Germany which on its turn needed, besides the vital ball bearings, the Swedish iron ore, wood products, paper pulp and paper.

Hitler had, in other words, important interests in Sweden, and wanted in the first place to guarantee, and if possible, to increase the exports of critical war materials from Sweden to the *Reich*.

The defeat of the Western Powers in 1940 and the relative weakness of Stalin in the Baltic area allowed Germany to establish its hegemony in the Baltic area. Because of those geographical factors and because of the economic dependence on German imports did Sweden have not much choice but follow the German demands and carry out a policy that was acceptable for Berlin.

Hitler could have gained little by an occupation of Sweden which was actually under his control and from the strategic point of view there was little need for the Nazi's to occupy the Swedish kingdom. Finland and Norway were more important and Denmark had been annexed for the safeguarding of the lines of communications to Norway. The Soviet Navy was locked up in Leningrad because the Germans controlled the Baltic Sea.

Germany profited from both the Swedish economic production and the transport system and an occupation of Sweden would probably have meant the destruction of the two.

The question remains however if Sweden was not more lenient than was



absolutely necessary, certainly after June 1941 when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union and could not spare troops for actions against Sweden.

The press appeared to be a problem for the Government in so far as it criticized the Nazi system and the Nazi conduct of war. Berlin demanded Stockholm to intervene against a number of newspapers. Significant is that censorship in the strict sense of the word was not necessary because self-censorship made it superfluous. The State Information Board, directly under control of the Foreign Office, was established in 1940 and "recommended" the newspapers what they ought to write and what they better could leave out. The Board "advised" about headlines and editorials which ought to be objective. Papers were asked to abstain from irony, sarcasm or insinuations with regard to the warring parties.

In the fall of 1940 the so called "Information days" were established on which the journalists were informed how they best could adapt their opinion to the government's points of view. Transgression of the rules was punished with confiscation and denial of transport facilities. All those rather far going measures served just one purpose: to keep Sweden out of the war.

In the period 1939 -1942 356 papers, magazines and books were confiscated<sup>16</sup>, 293 of those confiscations concerned articles against the Axispowers (who accordingly profited most of that measure), 52 against the Allies while the rest applied to "the others". During the initial years of the war there was a clear tendency to apply the rules to the advantage of Germany. The communist press was hardest hit by the so called transport prohibition which denied access to transport facilities: four out of the six papers were communist.

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, the leading papers in the country appeared to be more anti Soviet Union than anti Nazi Germany and that should last until the German defeat at Stalingrad in early 1943. Since that turning point in the war the sympathy of the papers went gradually into the direction of the allies, being the future victors of the war.<sup>17</sup>

In Sweden the German "crusade against communism" enjoyed popularity in circles of Nazi sympathizers and anti-Soviet citizens. Also king Gustav expressed in private that he understood the German necessity of starting a preventive war against the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup>

The government did not take measures against those utterances of approval with regard to the fate of the Soviet Union although the press restrictions did not only concern Germany but all the belligerent parties. On the contrary, the Swedish government did something else: it gave in to the German request in 1941 for transit of the so called "Engelbrecht" division.<sup>19</sup> The Germans made the demand on the same day that their troops invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Permission was asked for the transport of a complete armed division under the command of general Engelbrecht from Oslo to Finland where the division was to fight against the Soviets.

Foreign minister G  nther is said to have promised Berlin another attitude in case of a German attack on the Soviet Union but according to the historian Alf Johansson that utterance must be seen in its context whereby G  nther's desire should have been to avoid a German ultimatum.<sup>20</sup>

It was not the only concession that Sweden made to the Germans. The German army used in the period 1940 -1943 10 % of the total Swedish Railway capacity, transporting over 650.000 soldiers. The German Navy, the *Kriegsmarine*, was allowed to make use of the Swedish territorial waters and the "air courier traffic" of the Luftwaffe, the German air force, flew unhindered over Swedish territory until 1944.

On the other hand Allied bombers were in that very same year (1944) shot down when they appeared over Swedish territory. The concessions to the Germans before the turn of the war in 1943 exceeded far the concessions which were done to the Allies after 1943. Neutrality or *Realpolitik*? Undoubtedly the latter.

The Nazi dominance in the Nordic area gave Germany an excellent opportunity to extract concessions from Sweden which in addition was almost entirely dependent on Germany. Accordingly the Allies were far less successful in their dealings with Sweden. They wanted above all that Sweden limited its exports of ball bearings and iron ore to Germany -being of vital importance to the Nazi war machine- but Sweden was only after fierce pressure willing to give in to these demands.

Und  n found a most ingenious answer to the question if Sweden during the Second World War stuck to its policy of neutrality:

"Criticism concerned certain departures from neutrality to the advantage of Germany, not the policy of neutrality itself."<sup>21</sup>

That is, of course, no answer to the question if there still can be talk of neutrality if so many concessions, how understandable they may have been in the given situation, were done as Sweden did during the last World War.

May wine still be called wine if water is added. Or does the definition depend on the measure of water that is appended? Undén seems not to have been bothered by such questions: One can criticize departures from neutrality but not neutrality itself. Most important in the period 1940 - 1945 was that Sweden had managed to stay out of the war. Staying out had been the guiding principle for Per Albin and his government and it should also become the guiding principle for Tage Erlander, Hansson's successor and his foreign minister Östen Undén.

It is obvious that Sweden was saved from acts of war on her territory in the very first place because of political, geological and strategic circumstances quite beyond her control and that it had very little to do with her declaration of neutrality. See what happened to Denmark, Norway and the Benelux countries.

Nevertheless the period 1939 - 1940 has had an enormous impact on the neutrality thinking of the Swedes and after the war the idea of neutrality became still deeper rooted in their minds. Sweden's wartime behaviour should also influence the relations with the USA, Great-Britain and the Soviet Union in the post-war period.

The word "neutrality" was taboo during the talks about the Scandinavian Defence Union in 1948 - 1949. It reminded the Danes and Norwegians too much of the Swedish concept of neutrality, or rather her departures from it, during the Second World War (see chapter 5). Already during the war did the Soviet press sometimes refer to the "neutrality" of Sweden.<sup>22</sup>

### c. The cold war.

When did the Cold War begin? Authors like D. Fleming and F. Schuman go back to 1918 when, after the revolution, Western troops invaded Russia.<sup>23</sup> Others discern the genesis right after the destruction of Nazi Germany and Japan in 1945 or in the years immediately thereafter when tensions between East and West grew rapidly. In this dissertation the cold war is chronologically limited to the period 1945 - 1949 and regarded as a bipolar conflict between East and West or rather between the capitalist USA and Western

Europe, with extra weight to Great Britain, and the communist Soviet Union and its allies.

In the international system which emerged after the disintegration of Europe in 1945, the USA and the Soviet Union were the dominant powers fighting for control and influence in the post war world; a struggle which, with a term of the American columnist Walter Lippman, should become known as "the cold war". The weapons of the cold war were, and still are, of a political, economical, ideological and also military nature (arms race and armament) but a direct military confrontation is avoided.

According to Terry Andersson<sup>24</sup> it was not the USA but Great Britain that until the second half of 1947 the primary adversary of the Soviet Union. This is essentially true for the Scandinavian situation. The Northern countries belonged traditionally to the English sphere of influence.

In the forties, fifties and until the middle sixties did the Western historians, the *traditionalists* as we call them now, depict the Soviet Union as the big evildoer, the principal cause of the birth of the Cold War, while the US were contributed a more or less passive role.<sup>25</sup>

From the second half of the 1960s onwards however, much of the blame of the cold was attributed to the United States. This school, the *revisionists*, laid much emphasis on economic motives behind US foreign policy, often described as "Open door imperialism" which stands for a reckless hunt for markets, investment opportunities and raw materials. The US foreign policy since the beginning of this century was based on the principle of the "open door" which aim it was to penetrate in the closed colonial markets of the big imperialistic powers. Now, after World War II, with the old imperialistic powers on the wane, the US had an excellent opportunity to make their open door dream come true. Also the Soviet Union, with its closed economy, was, according to the revisionists, now to be integrated in the new, open world economy. Well known revisionists who put extreme weight on economic motives are Kolko, David Horowitz, William Appleman Williams and Gar Alperovitz.<sup>26</sup>

The *post revisionists* which emerged in the 1970's adopted a kind of middle position between traditionalists and revisionists; they combine insights and themes from both schools.<sup>27</sup>

#### **d. the period 1945 - 1949.**

The end of the war in 1945 did not bring a lasting period of rest to Europe but meant instead an new era of disturbance and upheaval. The wartime Allies soon transformed into enemies. It did not come as a complete surprise because the contours of the schism could already be discerned at the conference at Yalta<sup>28</sup> (February 1945) where Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin discussed the post war European order and "the right of all people too choose the form of government under which they will live".

It would turn out otherwise. The factual presence of the Red and Allied Armies in respectively Eastern- and Western Europe appeared to be decisive for Europe's post war borders. "Whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it its own social system as far as his army can reach."<sup>29</sup> Later, Stalin should remark that that statement was not completely true: If the war time allies had found a solution for the German question things would probably have run another course.

The Potsdam Conference in July 1945 where the allied leaders gathered for the last of the great World War II conferences, became, with regard to the main issues, a failure because the main questions, i.e. the future of Germany, Eastern Europe and the German Reparation Payments, remained unsettled.

They agreed however on the establishment of a Council of Foreign Ministers where those problems should be discussed in the future. But not settled, as soon became obvious. The mutual distrust had already grown too much and the various Councils of Foreign Ministers failed. After the ending of the London meeting, on December 15, 1947 the partition of Germany and the division of Europe into two hostile blocs seemed unavoidable. Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov pleaded for a "unified" Germany which meant that the Soviets wanted to treat Germany as an economic unit so that they could obtain reparation payments from the Eastern and Western zone. A unified Germany meant at the same time the prevention of the birth of a strong, anti communistic and Western oriented West Germany. The Soviets who had suffered like no other nation from the Nazis insisted on substantial reparations. Understandable enough, they wanted to castrate Germany economically in order to prevent a military renaissance in the future, while the British and Americans preferred to revive the German industry for the sake of Europe's economical recovery. Besides, the West regarded an impoverished Germany too easy a prey for communism.

After the failure in London, the British Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, considered it necessary to come to some sort of Western Defence system in which also the USA had to be involved. Bevin launched his thoughts about European cooperation in his well known speech in the British House of Commons on January 22, 1948.<sup>30</sup>

Bevin's proposals resulted in the Brussels Pact<sup>31</sup> which was signed on March 17, by Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The six countries agreed on a joint defence system: If a nation would be the subject for an attack, the others would rush to the rescue. Germany was named as the potential aggressor but there is no doubt that in fact the Soviet Union was meant.

The Brussels Pact was eventually to result in the North Atlantic Treaty of April 1949. The establishment of NATO in 1949 was the most important and far reaching event of the Cold War in Europe that is covered by this dissertation. The proposals for a Western pact (NATO) and the consequent Swedish propositions for a Scandinavian Defence Union have for that reason got much attention. It could hardly be expected that Stockholm should change its course in the years to come after having rejected the membership of NATO. Sweden had successfully passed its neutrality examination and stood the NATO test. For that reason I have gone no further than the year of 1949 which in my opinion was the crucial year with respect to Swedish neutrality. The war in Korea<sup>32</sup> was with regard to neutrality less crucial than the establishment of NATO because it was much less of an immediate threat for Sweden's independence.

Tensions had been growing constantly in the period 1945-1949 (see chapter 4). Ex-wartime leader Churchill made his contribution with his Fulton Speech in March 1946:

"From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent" and US president Truman launched on March 12, 1947 his so called Truman doctrine:

"It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."

In his "Iron Curtain" speech Churchill remarked as well that the Soviets desired "the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines." These words

fell in Europe on a fertile soil. The communist coup in Hungary (1947) and Czechoslovakia (1948) strengthened the uncomfortable European feelings of insecurity.

Hardly anybody paid attention to the Russian motives and their demands for a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and the West and their desire for an unarmed, demilitarized Germany. Germany had, after all, crossed the Russian borders two times within thirty years. They did not trust the West, no more than the West trusted them. Marshall aid was to the Soviets nothing more than an attempt to undermine their security and independence with economic means: an attempt of the USA to break in into their closed economy. In the same year that Marshall aid was announced the USA started its embargo policy against the Soviet Union and its satellites. This "economic warfare"<sup>33</sup> should also have its effects on Sweden that in 1946 had concluded a credit and trade agreement with the Soviets.

In Scandinavia, The Finno-Russian pact and the rumours about an impending Russian move against their territory was experienced as an extra confirmation of the Soviet menace and their lust for expansion (see chapter 4). In those times of unrest, menace and pure distrust, whereas Norway and Denmark abandoned their traditional neutrality, Sweden decided to continue the way of "non participation in alliances aiming at neutrality in the event of war". This dissertation will not deal with all the events that can be put under the title of "cold war" in the period 1945-1949. I have chosen a thematic approach. The Swedish neutrality attitude will be analyzed against the backgrounds of the events<sup>34</sup> which are taken up to discussion in the various chapters.

#### **e. Problems to be discussed.**

In this dissertation I will try to find an answer to the question why Sweden in the above pictured turbulent times stuck to its neutral course. Has there been pressure from the Western world on the Swedes to abandon its neutrality? Was there counter-pressure from the side of the Soviet Union? And was consideration with Finland part of Swedish political decisionmaking as so often is assumed?

The Swedish economy was (and still is) largely dependent on raw materials and high technology (also military technology) from the West. Was that factor of dependence not a direct threat to neutrality?

In brief: Has the Swedish neutrality in those years of fiercely growing tensions between East and West ever been at stake and for that reason been subject for serious discussions within the government and the political parties?



## CHAPTER 1. THE UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP

Is neutrality compatible with the UN membership? The question was put forward in 1945, but it never provoked such vehement debates as in 1920 when Sweden discussed her membership for the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 The League of Nations debate.

In 1920 there had been a fierce resistance in the Swedish Parliament against the League of Nations membership, both from the extreme left and the right. The opponents regarded the membership as a latent danger for the nation's neutrality because the member states could be compelled to join in economic and military sanctions against peace-disturbing nations.

The League was supposed to include every nation of the world but from the beginning it lacked the universal character which in fact was the essential condition for making it function properly. The Soviet Union did not adhere; no more than the USA although it had been its own president Wilson who had proposed the foundation of the League. Furthermore membership was forbidden to the losers of World War I. Germany and the Soviet Union were admitted in respectively 1926 and 1934 but that was of course of no influence anymore on the adherence debate in Sweden.

The word "neutrality" did not even exist in the Covenant of the League of Nations but it was silently perceived to be non-existent under the system of the League.<sup>2</sup> The question of neutrality became concrete when Switzerland applied for the membership in 1920 without wanting to give up her own traditional neutrality. The matter was discussed at a meeting of the Council in London (1920). The Council concluded that "complete neutrality in everything, economic and military, is clearly inconsistent with the position of a member of the League"<sup>3</sup> but it was also realized that the Swiss were in a unique position, based on an ample hundred years old tradition that even was incorporated in the Law of Nations. The Council solved the problem by stating that it believed that Switzerland "would not stand aside when the high principles of the League have to be defended." Unanimously the Council declared that

"while affirming that the conception of neutrality of the members of

the League is incompatible with the principle that all members will be obliged to cooperate in enforcing respect for their engagements"

but recognized at the same time that the Swiss neutrality was not incompatible with the Covenant of the League of Nations.<sup>4</sup> There could be no doubt that Switzerland was the only exception to the rule that neutrality was incompatible with the League's membership. But that remarkable decision in favour of Switzerland could not stop the debate on the compatibility of neutrality with the provisions of the League.

Article 16 which dealt with the question of sanctions was the most debated one and gave rise to much disagreement. A clear interpretation was therefore deemed to be necessary: Who decides when the sanctions of Article 16 shall become applicable and what are the precise duties of the League members when those sanctions have been made effective?<sup>5</sup> The neutral governments of Denmark, Norway and Sweden proposed with regard to Article 16 the following amendment:

"At the request of a Member for which the applications of the above provisions might entail serious danger, the Council may authorize this Member to maintain intercourse, in such measure as the Council shall decide, with the Covenant-breaking state."<sup>6</sup>

The Council refused the Scandinavian proposal. The final resolution of the interpretation of Article 16 appeared to be an empty formality, acceptable for all: The Council was denied the authority to make a binding decision for the League members. The nations could decide for themselves and the role of the Council was restricted to giving advice.

The anti-League members in the Swedish Riksdag argued that the League was too small and too powerless to be efficient. The government however emphasized that all nations could be expected to become members in due course and that the League had advantages for Sweden in case that it ever should be attacked. In that situation help could be expected from the League of Nations.

The government led by the social democrat Hjalmar Branting considered the League's ultimate aim, maintenance of peace, which was also to the benefit of Sweden, so important that giving up a small part of its neutrality was justified. That was the price that had to be paid. The struggle in the Parliament was long and hard. The Social democrats and Liberals were pro,

the communists and conservatives against an association with the League of Nations. In 1920 238 Riksdag members voted in favour of the League while 114 parliament members declared to be against adherence.<sup>7</sup> But the debate about the membership did not stop in 1920 and should continue far into the thirties.

One of the Swedes that got an international reputation for his work in the League of Nations was Östen Undén. Remarkable was that the Swedes until the outbreak of the Second World War abandoned the term "neutrality" to delineate her foreign policy. And not unjustly. The League Covenant obliged Sweden to take part in economic sanctions against aggressors although the rules with regard to participation in military sanctions were less binding in character. Moreover, Sweden could on its turn, in case of an attack, count on assistance from the League members.

Switzerland, in contrast, still called herself neutral. The Swiss had demanded and received exemption from any commitment to take part in military sanctions.<sup>8</sup>

## 1.2 The UN Debate.

The news that the Swedish government in 1946, with Undén as Foreign Minister, was willing to join the newly founded United Nations did not come as a surprise. Contrary to 1920 there was hardly any resistance. Through the years Sweden had become familiar with a peace organization and also the situation was quite different this time. All the Great Powers did now belong to the original signatories of the new peace organization and the last world war, which had come very close to the Swedish borders, had convinced the nation that everything should be done in order to prevent a new disastrous war.

The UN was in the euphoria of the post war epoch generally regarded as the best instrument for maintaining peace. For those reasons there was nothing that could be called a real discussion. On June 27 1946 all the parties in the Riksdag appeared to be in favour of the UN membership, be it without much enthusiasm. Already before that date Undén had concluded that: "Everybody seems to agree that it is a political necessity for us to join".<sup>9</sup> There was however not a trace of the illusions that had characterized the 1920 adherence. The liberal newspaper Dagens Nyheter remarked in an editorial that realism was much greater this time and that that only was attractive

far away from despair."<sup>10</sup>

The same paper published on September 6 1945 a Gallup poll that showed the following results. 49 % of the population was pro UN; 6% pro on certain conditions, 26% answered negative and 19% had not made up their minds yet. The question if Sweden should supply military troops in times of crisis for the maintenance of peace resulted in the following answers in which a division according to party colour is made:

	Cons.	Liberal.	Agrar.	Soc.Dem.	Comm.
yes	52%	43%	39%	50%	60%
yes, but under certain condition	4%	9%	7%	6%	6%
no	31%	29%	29%	26%	25%
don't know	13%	19%	25%	18%	9%

In the newspapers and in the Riksdag an almost total majority for the membership could be noticed but there was some criticism as well. Undén had sketched the advantages of a world-wide peace organization as a means for friendship, peace and cooperation. He had also underlined the humanitarian, social, cultural and economical aims of the organization but he had also remarked that Sweden should refuse to choose side if the UN should split into blocs of the Superpowers.

The communist Riksdag member Hagberg showed himself to be skeptical about

"these speculations that we should be ready to draw back ourselves in our shell as soon as frictions between the leading world powers arise and proclaim our neutrality."

According to Hagberg that was "rather unrealistic."<sup>11</sup> The question was put forward, like in 1920, if the membership was not to be regarded as contrary to neutrality. Undén admitted that the UN membership, to a certain extent, meant a departure from pure neutrality.<sup>12</sup> But in contrast to 1920 did the government continue to describe her foreign policy as "neutral."<sup>13</sup>

The Swiss government considered the Charter of the United nations incompatible with her conception of neutrality and refused the membership. This time the Swiss had not succeeded in securing for themselves a privileged status in the community of nations. Their special kind of perpetual neutrality was this time not recognized.<sup>14</sup>

status in the community of nations. Their special kind of perpetual neutrality was this time not recognized.<sup>14</sup>

Sweden was of course aware of her responsibilities when she entered the UN and realized that the membership implied a considerable limitation of the own national sovereignty. Through her association Sweden committed herself to take part in economic and military sanctions if the Security Council considered them necessary but Undén perceived in that same Security Council also the guarantee that Sweden could never, against her will, be drawn into a war between East and West, neither on the side of the West nor the East.

The Security Council decides if sanctions against peace violating countries are to be taken but she can do so only with a qualified majority. The Council consists of eleven members and a decision to take sanctions against a state requires the vote of seven of the eleven members.; including those of the five permanent members, i.e. the USA, the Soviet Union, France, Britain and China. Because of the fact that sanctions required an unanimous consent of the Great Powers there existed, according to Sweden, no danger to find herself unexpectedly engaged at the side of Washington or Moscow in a future war. The old League of Nations had known no such veto for the Big Powers.<sup>15</sup> That things could go wrong anyway as well as the fact that the Council was not a warrant for staying outside conflicts -as should become evident during the war in Korea- was something that Undén could not possibly have foreseen at that time.<sup>16</sup>

Many times Undén had declared that Sweden did not want to be involved in a war between the Super Powers, on neither side. In case war should break out, Sweden would follow a neutral course. In the words of Undén to the Riksdag on October 22, 1945:

"if against expectation a tendency for the Great Powers to divide into two blocs manifests itself within the organization, our policy must be to avoid being drawn into any camp or group."<sup>17</sup>

In the first years of her membership, Sweden refused consistently to choose side in conflicts and followed a policy of non-involvement in the political disputes of the Super Powers. If issues became particularly troublesome Sweden rather abstained from voting. It did so for example in the Greek and Korean affair. Both were cases in which the USA showed themselves very

keen on support from the entire Western world. On March 12 1947 the American president Truman delivered his well known speech to Congress which would go to history as the Truman Doctrine. In this speech Truman drew the contours of a global, ideological struggle between the Soviet-Union and the USA. He divided the world into free and oppressed nations and declared that

"(..) it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."<sup>18</sup>

The Swedes, as well as their Scandinavian neighbours, were of the opinion that the USA put far too much weight on the help that the Greek guerrillas were said to receive from Moscow and that they enjoyed a strong support among the Greek population. In the case of Korea the Scandinavian countries put forward that the US proposal, to create a national Korean government on the basis of free elections, was not a matter that should be dealt with in the UN. It rather should be settled in the peace treaty with Japan.

The UN was in Stockholm not regarded as an alliance of States but as an organization of nations where colliding mutual interests could be discussed and settled.

The Americans were not happy with the Swedish stand and wanted a more pro-Western standpoint. It was, in the opinion of Washington, not only neutrality but also "an ancient fear of Russia" that conditioned the attitude of Stockholm.<sup>19</sup> During a visit that Cumming, Counsellor of the US Embassy, paid to Undén he made no secret of the fact that he did not like the Swedish course in the UN. The Swedish Foreign Minister on his turn expressed his negative feelings with regard to the policy of Washington in the UN.<sup>20</sup>

But the effects of the Cold War had its influence on Sweden as well and Washington could establish that the Swedish position in the past indeed had been marked by a "relatively negative position on major political differences between East and West" but that modifications in that attitude had been observed during the sessions of the General Assembly in 1948

"when Sweden on several occasions voted with the US and other major Western powers in opposition to the solid Soviet-dominated bloc."<sup>21</sup>

The deep mistrust toward Sweden of only two years ago had disappeared. Still in 1947, Lovett, Undersecretary of State, had explained to the US representa-

tive at the UN that he was worried that Sweden had been mentioned as an alternative candidate for the Security Council:

"We feel election of Sweden to this post at this time would be unfortunate since it would tend to confirm impression that Sweden is very close to if not actually in the Soviet bloc. Because of pro-Soviet attitude of the Swedish Foreign Minister this tendency would probably be accentuated were Sweden elected to the SC."

Lovett preferred India as a Security Council member before Sweden.<sup>22</sup> Significant for Lovett's distorted Cold War view was his consideration that Undén was more or less a puppet of Moscow.

But only a few years later the Americans had got what they wanted: moral support from Sweden in their struggle against Soviet communism. And not from Sweden alone. In the fall of 1947 all the West Europeans countries had gathered round the USA and its struggle against communism.<sup>23</sup> The source of Lovett's view on the Swedish government might have been an OSS (Office of Strategic Services) report of 1945 wherein was reported that Sweden did not put much confidence in the UN as a adequate safeguard against possible Soviet aggression.

"The Swedes must, therefore, it is felt, pursue a friendly policy toward their eastern neighbor on their own initiative and hope that the USSR will restrain any aggressive intent it may harbor in regard to northern Europe."<sup>24</sup>

The success of gathering Western Europe around the anti-Soviet theme may have had its influence on the politics of the State Department with regard to Sweden and have induced them to believe that Sweden was sensitive for their ideological cold war arguments and that she accordingly could be moved away from her position of neutrality and incorporated in a Western alliance in 1948-1949. But soon it became obvious that the Americans had made a totally false judgement: Sweden refused to align to a Western security system under the leadership of the US (see chapter 5, 6 and 7) and even did so with an *appeal* to article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations:

"Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their

activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."<sup>25</sup>

Switzerland, on the contrary, still did so. The Swiss had demanded and received exemption from any commitment to take part in military sanctions.



## CHAPTER 2. BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. THE CREDIT AND TRADE - AGREEMENT WITH RUSSIA.

The credit and trade-agreement, the so called "*Ryssavtalet*", between Sweden and the Soviet Union that was signed on October 7, 1946 has been object for much dissension in Swedish politics, media and business life. Erlander remarks in his memoirs that the debates about the agreement possibly were the first sign that the cold war between East and West had reached Sweden<sup>1</sup> and also the Soviets considered the agreement as an stage in the emerging tug-of-war between the Superpowers.<sup>2</sup>

Washington protested against the *Ryssavtalet*, not realizing at that time that the agreement offered her an excellent opportunity to coerce Swedish companies to take part in their embargo-policy against the Soviet Union because of their dependence on American raw materials, machinery and technology.<sup>3</sup>

### 2.1 History and background.

Sweden has been one of the few countries that concluded a trade agreement with the USSR (1924) but trade in the Interbellum never came up to Swedish expectations and exports to the Soviet Union did in 1938 not exceed 17 million Swedish crowns.<sup>4</sup> A first endeavour to enter into a credit and trade agreement with the Soviets was made by the social democratic administration of P.A. Hansson in the fall of 1934 but the plans of Trade Minister F. Ekman stranded on the opposition of the non-socialist parties.

The Swedish export industries, which suffered from the international economic crisis of the thirties continued making plans for a credit agreement with Stalin's Soviet Union and kept in close contact with the Soviet minister in Stockholm, Madam Kollontai, but the outbreak of the so called Winter War (1939-1940) between the Soviet Union and Finland, in which the Swedish sympathies were with the Fins, caused an almost completely stop of the negotiations.

Also the normal, still low profile trade between Sweden and its giant neighbour in the East reduced to almost nothing. But already some three weeks after the belligerent countries had concluded peace in Moscow (March 13 1940), the "Russia committee" of the Swedish export association in which among others the Swedish roller and ball bearings company of SKF (Svenska

Kullager Fabriken) and ASEA (Allmänna Svenska Elektriska Aktiebolaget), manufacturer of electric machinery, were represented announced that:

"there were a large number of Soviet Russian inquiries and that there was reason to assume that the export possibilities are becoming highly important in the near future."<sup>5</sup>

Exactly one week after this announcement, on April 9 1940, Germany launched its attack on Denmark and Norway and laid a minefield in the Skagerrak so that Sweden's trade with the West was cut off in one stroke.

The Soviet Union now became important as a trading partner, a fact that Soviet negotiator Mikoian was well aware of and also skillfully exploited. The trade negotiations were hard and prolonged and the result was not very satisfying for the Swedes but they had little choice because they needed all the products they could lay their hands on.

The agreement was signed on September 7, 1940. At the same time Sweden placed a credit of 100 million Swedish crowns at the disposal of Moscow. What the Soviets wanted in the first place was industrial equipment. The agreement was shortlived. Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, only eight months after the signing of the agreement, closed also the door for Swedish exports to the East.

Rolf Sohlman had since 1940 been the diplomat who was in charge of the economic negotiations with the Soviet Union. His Soviet counterpart was Michail Nikitin, trade delegate at the Soviet embassy in Stockholm but furthermore also Madam Kollontai played an active part in the negotiations.

According to Ingmar Häggblöf, a well known Swedish diplomat who spent many years in the Soviet Union, it is quite unlikely that this couple during the critical years of the war received their instructions from the Kremlin. They probably acted on their own initiative in trying to obtain a big loan for the post-war reconstruction of their country and "the men in power in the Kremlin could reasonably not have anything against it."<sup>6</sup>

Another consideration of the Soviet Embassy must, according to Häggblöf, have been that the more Sweden exported to the East the more they should become tied to the Soviet Union. That may seem true in retrospect but it is hardly likely that the Soviets foresaw the rise of the Cold War which in fact is the ultimate implication of Häggblöf's remark. Kollontai was a diplomat with an excellent feeling for the proper relations, one who knew whom she had to

contact at the right time and at the right place. Characteristic for her stratagem was that she, most of the times in the company of Nikitin, now and then came with rather vague propositions consisting of a blend of questions and promises. It seemed then however that she, in turn, barely took notice of the answers of Rolf Sohlman and sometimes half a year could pass by before Sohlman learned the answers on his counter proposals. At a reception on the first of January 1944 Michail Nikitin met Sohlman and it is exactly there where the basis for the later Agreement can be found. Nikitin, who had good contacts with the Swedish industry, informed Sohlman that Swedish concerns were eager to do business with the Soviet Union. There was after all an enormous industrial over capacity in Sweden after the war. Nikitin stated that Moscow was definitively interested in doing business with Sweden. The only obstacle was that post war Soviet Union in all probability would not be able to pay in cash for the deliveries and that's why he proposed that Sweden should export on credit terms.

Sohlman informed Herman Eriksson, Minister of Trade, who let know that Sweden was interested in extensive trade connections, also on credit basis. The condition in Stockholm was that the Soviet Union should deliver coal, oil and raw materials because the Swedish industries would otherwise not be able to export.

In short: the credit should be in proportion to the deliveries which, in their turn, were dependent on deliveries of Soviet raw materials. As usual Nikitin and Kollontai kept silent for a long time.

The armistice between the Soviet Union and Finland in the autumn of 1944 opened up prospects for transport of goods between the two trade partners to be, and Moscow considered the time ripe for new negotiations.

Stockholm was asked to make a serious proposal that covered a period of five years. Kollontai suggested an annual credit of 200 million Swedish crowns for 5 years and, for political reasons, preferably a state credit. She also pointed out that a trade agreement offered an excellent opportunity for building up good post war relations with the Soviet Union.

In the meantime Herman Eriksson had been replaced by the Liberal Bertil Ohlin. The new Minister of Trade discussed, accompanied by Sohlman and the Minister of Finance Ernst Wigforss, the Soviet proposal with representatives of the Swedish industry and banks. With the end of the war in sight the latter appeared to be less eager than a year before because the world

markets, where the profits might be highest, should in a short time be accessible again.

For the rest of the war the Soviets kept silent on the credit issue but when the negotiations finally started it appeared that the Swedish industry once again had changed its view on the post war economy. Economists had predicted that the war would be followed by an economic depression, shrinking markets, sinking prices and increasing unemployment, just as had been the case after World War One.

Professor Gunnar Myrdal, who became Minister of Trade on July 31 1945, was an advocate of that conception and had expressed his view in his book *Warning against peace optimism*. Exports would become difficult, Germany, the main export market was destroyed and it was expected that the US and the UK should oust Sweden from both their own and the world markets. So in the summer of 1945 the Soviet Union seemed once again to be the solution for the expected and feared export problems. The final negotiations took another year but finally, in October 1946, the *Ryssavtalet*, as the Credit and Trade Agreement was called, became reality.

But what also had become reality was the Cold War. And moreover the export expectations had changed again: The Russian Agreement became now an object of vehement debate.

## 2.2 The terms of the "Ryssavtalet"

The Soviet Union was not the only country that received a credit from Sweden but it was the one that drew the most attention. Other countries had for their reconstruction, before the ultimate negotiations with Moscow even had got under way, received credits for a total worth of over 2 milliard Swedish crowns.

What were the terms of this so much debated agreement which so clearly reflected the urgent need of Moscow for industrial equipment, necessary for Russia's reconstruction, and the Swedish hunger for raw materials as well as the desire to replace her lost export markets?

There were two parts to the agreement: a loan and a barter deal. A loan of 1 milliard Swedish crowns (about \$ 280.000.000) was granted to the Soviets. This credit was to be used over a period of five years (1947-1952) at the rate of 200 million crowns (about \$ 50. million) a year and was to be repaid in 1962 - 1967. The effective interest rate was no more than 2 3/8 per cent.

With the credit the Soviets were able to purchase heavy machinery, motors, generators, high quality steel and electrical equipment.

What the Soviets needed in the first place were the products of the electro-technical and engineering industry. In addition Moscow should buy for 100 million crowns worth of the same commodities per annum, on a barter basis. Russia agreed to pay for the Swedish shipments with raw materials which were needed by the Swedish industries.<sup>7</sup>

Once the agreement was concluded the Soviets should deal directly with the Swedish industry and not with the government. An American magazine defined the situation exactly in the headlines of an article on the credit Agreement: *Swedish businessmen hold key to delivery of goods to Russia*.<sup>8</sup>

It reported that

"the businessmen of Sweden -not the Government- will determine whether or not their country is to be tied closely to the economy of Russia. (...) Joker in the agreement is that the Swedish Government does not guarantee the deliveries. The Russians are being told that their negotiations from now on must be with businessmen. The Government of Sweden merely extends credit and promises to grant export licenses, once the goods are ready for shipment. Thus, Sweden has left herself a loophole in her deal with Russia. (...) The businessmen can make the trade agreement work, or they can sabotage it by dragging their feet so far as production is concerned."

In how far businessmen have sabotaged the agreement is not exactly known but there was undoubtedly much resistance.

### **2.3 Swedish political and press debates on the "Ryssavtalet"**

The Ryssavtalet gave rise to vehement debates in the Riksdag and also in the press. Nevertheless it was approved by the Second Chamber where 156 members voted in favour of the agreement, 18 against while 22 members abstained from voting.<sup>9</sup> The debates were not so much about the contents of the agreement or the origins of the Credit Agreement which is quite understandable since the first negotiations took place when the Grand Coalition Government of the war, was still in power. So in fact, all the parties, except the communist, felt responsible for the contents of the Agreement although the opposition dissociated itself now from the contents but there

"(..) was no choice. The agreement with the Soviet Union was already drawn up and signed on behalf of Sweden by the government. The task of the Riksdag was not to adjust, to change, to examine one or another detail. The Riksdag had to approve or to reject, to say yes or no. A third alternative was not there. It was a coercive situation. Who did not want to say no, had no other choice than to accept."<sup>10</sup>

Actually the opposition had preferred to vote negative but they were afraid of a number of unforeseeable complications with regard to the trade with the Soviet Union in the future. It could have meant the exclusion of Sweden from the Soviet markets for a long time and that was considered too high a risk because there was still the chance of economic crisis in the Western world and in that perspective the Soviet Union was, being no part of the capitalistic economy, considered to be a safe way out.

A reliable and stable market in case the Western economy should collapse. The fear for depression was rooted firmly in the minds of some leading politicians and they knew from painful experience what a global depression could do to the overseas trade of which the economy of Sweden was so much dependent. The destruction of Germany had already caused a big gap in their exports. Moreover Germany had ceased to be the supplier of (raw) materials for the Swedish industry and although the Soviets were not able to replace Germany as contractor of for instance chemicals, textiles, machinery, coal and cokes<sup>11</sup> she could in the future prohibit the by her controlled zone in Germany to resume the im- and exports business with Sweden. Besides the Soviets had a strong influence on the vital Swedish coal imports from Poland and could cause via that way serious disturbances in the Swedish industry. Apart from the fear of a worldwide economic depression and the worry of a Soviet grip on their economy there was, and certainly immediately after the war, a feeling that something had to be done for the war devastated Soviet Union. During the war Sweden had done nothing to hinder the needs of the Soviet Union. On the contrary: she had allowed the transport of German *Wehrmacht* troops by rail over Swedish territory to the Russo-German front. In that light the credit agreement may also be seen as a kind of *Wiedergutmachung*.<sup>12</sup>

But much of the moral feeling, that something had to be done, had disappeared at the time when the agreement was signed in the fall of 1946.

Most of the criticism of the adversaries was concentrated at the size of the credit, which was considered too high, and the interest of 2 3/8 percent which was lower than the State of Sweden herself paid for loans. It was also less than the other countries, that had obtained Swedish loans, had to pay. Another point that was frequently put forward was that the government had not taken notice of the capacity of the industry. The capacity, so it was asserted, was too small to be able to carry out the Soviet demands.

Folkpartiet (the liberal party) was of the opinion that the Ryssavtalet could be a danger for the freedom of enterprise. Another complaint was that the government could take measures and put the concerns under pressure to meet the Soviet demands which could be done at the cost of (more profitable) markets in the West.<sup>13</sup>

In other words: the freedom of trade could be threatened by the Government which, being social democratic, was not considered to be the ideal guardian of the freedom of enterprise. But despite all criticism the general opinion was, to speak with the conservative leader Fritiof Domö "that we ought to expand the relations with Russia", something that also Folkpartiet leader Bertil Ohlin and the leader of the *Bondeförbundet* (Farmers League), Pehrsson Bramstorp, could agree with.<sup>14</sup> But the opinion, compared with the summer of 1945 when the negotiations had started, had definitively changed. Everybody, including the industrialists had at that time been convinced that an economic crisis would inevitably come. Now, at the end of 1946 there was not a trace of a depression to be noticed and the industries worked, as far as the supply of raw material and energy allowed at full capacity. The conviction grew that the depression would never come, especially in the circles of the opposition but it was for the greatest part not shared by the social democrats and neither by the communists. The latter had been warm supporters from the very beginning and praised the Government with regard to the Ryssavtalet.<sup>15</sup> Hilding Hagberg, the spokesman of the communists was not only convinced of the coming crisis but also of Sweden's relative incapacity to compete with the US and the UK on the world markets because of "the unprecedented rationalization and effectiveness which has taken place there".<sup>16</sup> The communists expected that Sweden had to deal with this murderous competition within two or three years or even less. The Soviet Union with her crisis free market could be the answer to the imminent danger of mass-unemployment and industrial inactivity.<sup>17</sup>

The opposition as well as the social democratic government party did not restrict their debates to the Riksdag. In fact all the parties did ventilate their opinions through closely connected or right-out owned newspapers. Best known and most vitriolic was the campaign of Herbert Tingsten, editor in chief, of the liberal newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*. We shall later return to Tingsten and his campaign of which Tage Erlander has remarked that it offered no "edifying reading". At the same time he accused the author of the vehement anti-Ryssavtalet prose that his "mental activity was paralysed by an absurd fear of communists".<sup>18</sup> Such a statement, although written down about fifteen years later gives an impression of the atmosphere in which the debates took place.

*Morgon Tidningen*, owned by the Social Democratic Party, and generally regarded as the government's mouth-piece did what it was expected to do and defended the Ryssavtalet without almost no traces of criticism. And no wonder, many of them were written by Undén. Much emphasis was put on the expected economic crisis, the loss of the traditional German markets and the heavy competition with the US and the UK on the American and English homemarkets as well as other markets in the capitalistic world. The Ryssavtalet was presented as the answer to mass-unemployment which, because of the above mentioned factors, soon was to be expected.

*Morgon Tidningen* did not restrict itself to the defence of the agreement but also attacked the opposition parties and papers and their doubts concerning the agreement.<sup>19</sup> Tingsten's *Dagens Nyheter* was of course the most favoured object for *Morgon Tidningen*'s attacks to which also Östen Undén made his (anonymous) contributions<sup>20</sup> but also the *Wiedergutmachung* theme was put forward.<sup>21</sup>

There were other Folkpartiet oriented papers that, in the wake of *Dagens Nyheter*, criticized the credit agreement but papers as *Stockholms Tidningen* and *Expressen* never became as ferocious as *Dagens Nyheter*. In fact they behaved quite moderately.

The most important conservative newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, tried to see the advantages and disadvantages of the agreement but appeared, like the equally conservative *Sydsvenka Dagbladet* not to be content with the concluded agreement and considered it in the end unrealizable. Also the main organ of the Farmers' League *Skånska Dagbladet* was not so happy about the terms of the agreement.<sup>22</sup>



It remains a strange phenomenon, this dividing line between the Social Democratic and Communist Party on the one side and the non-socialistic opposition at the other side. The attitude of the Communists, with their close relations to the Soviet Union, does hardly need further explanation but it is the attitude of the social democrats and the non-socialist parties that deserve a closer examination.

Normally anti-communism was not less strong among the Social democrats<sup>23</sup> than among the non-socialists although the Social democrats never went so far as those representatives of the conservative and liberal part of the nation who warmly welcomed the German attack on the Soviet Union, Operation Barbarossa, in the summer of 1941. They were openly enthusiastic about this "Crusade against Communism" because it was considered to be an exceptional chance to get rid of communism. Especially in military circles many supporters of that idea could be found.<sup>24</sup>

Yet the anti-Soviet attitude was -for the time being transferred in opposition against the Ryssavtalet -at the non-socialist side in the summer of 1946 much more pronounced than in the ranks of their political opponents. It is unlikely that only the non-socialists were infected by the Cold War virus whereas the socialists were left in peace. Part of the explanation could be that the Ryssavtalet was concluded by a Social-democratic government and that the socialists for political reasons could not desert their own administration.

The anti-communist feelings had certainly not been abandoned among the social democrats but they were suppressed for party-political reasons. Also Undén with his outspoken suspicion of both American and Soviet Union politics might have had a soothing influence on his partisans and the same may be said about Prime Minister Erlander.<sup>25</sup>

The non-socialists on the other hand were no part of the government although they were co-responsible, because the terms of the agreement had, roughly, come off during the time that the Grand Coalition Government was in power. But there was also something else. The liberals and conservatives, i.e. *Folkpartiet* and *Höger* had, as contrasted with the Social Democratic Party, close connections with the industry that had to make the deliveries to the Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup> And that industry was not longer interested in doing business with the Soviets.

## 2.4 The industry and the Ryssavtalet.

Why was the Swedish industry so unwilling to do business with the Soviet Union? Various reasons can be found in the existing literature but they have all one thing in common: none of them satisfy completely and all carry a part of the truth.

Inflation has been mentioned as one of the reasons as well as political hostility to the Soviet Union.<sup>27</sup> It has been put forward that the agreement could tie the Swedish economy to that of the Soviet Union in such a way that Sweden would have become entirely dependent on the Soviets. The Herald Tribune of July 7 1946 wrote that there were two schools of thoughts:

"The first holds that economic policy must match political policy; that Sweden has always sought trade with Russia, though unsuccessfully until now, and that now is the time for Sweden to prove itself willing and able to establish strong trade relations on both sides of its borders. The conservative school, on the other hand, is worried over the size of the credit, its barter provisions and the start of a trend that could eventually tie Sweden to Russia, as the Balkan countries now are finding themselves economically tied."

Businessmen who had to delivered the goods belonged accordingly to this American paper to the conservative school.

Another objection that was raised was that the Soviet Union could not be relied upon as a permanent market. The Soviets wanted in the first place to rebuild their industry with the help of Swedish deliveries. But their aim was to make their home market independent from foreign countries. If that had been realized they should withdraw themselves from the Swedish market, leaving the Swedes with an inflated industrial capacity. An economic crisis would be the result.<sup>28</sup> All these American sources breathed a Cold War spirit which at that time was more matured in the USA than on the European continent. In Washington the Soviet Union was not thought of as a normal trade-partner but as a perfidious empire that tried to draw Sweden into its orbit by economic means.

Fear of the Soviets had become a reality in the US although it still had the monopoly on the atomic bomb and moreover had an overwhelming economic power. Significant of the atmosphere in the USA was that Churchill's speech in Fulton, Missouri, (the "iron curtain" speech of march 5 1946) in the presence of president Truman, had caused a nationwide shock and fear.

The fear that Churchill generated with this much noticed speech was projected by US News on Sweden when it wrote:

"Fear of Russia has increased in Stockholm with Soviet expansion westward. Appearance of rockets in Swedish skies, presumably from Russian experimenters, has done nothing to lessen the fear."

The first signs of the Cold War had probably reached Sweden indeed, as also Tage Erlander had assumed, but the rockets in the Swedish skies were the product of over-exited minds: they appeared to be nothing else than falling stars.

Nevertheless these non-existing "ghostrockets" had their impact on the public opinion, especially in the countryside. It was alleged that the Soviets tried to frighten the Swedes to make huge deliveries on credit but according to a memorandum of Undén, a few years later, the Soviets had never exercised any pressure in the case of the Credit Agreement.<sup>29</sup>

The reasons of the Swedish businessmen for not wanting to do business with the East were however less infected by fear than the Americans supposed. The terms for the Ryssavtalet had been discussed thoroughly in the *urikesutskottet*, the foreign committee, in which the parties were represented in proportion to their parliamentary strength.

Representatives of the industries which had to make the deliveries had been present at the meetings of the committee and had expressed their doubts about the implement of the Agreement because of a shortage of labour, raw materials, machinery and energy supply. It was emphasized by the Industry Association (Industriförbundet) and Export Association (Exportföreningen) that coercive measures by the government that would reduce the freedom of doing business would not occur but it was exactly that non-coercion statement that made the campaign of Herbert Tingsten of Dagens Nyheter waged to culminate as we will see here below. But it was not only lack of labour, raw materials etc. that did cause the disturbance, as the spokesman for the Export Association Rolf von Heidenstam declared, during a meeting in July 1946 with Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson and three other members of his government.

The industry was fully aware of the necessity of good relations with the Soviet Union, not in the least trade relations, because it was likely to become

an important market for Sweden in the future, certainly when an economic crisis would arise. But it was irresponsible to export the huge quantities that the Soviets wanted. It would lay too high a claim on the capacity of the industry and hamper the export to Western markets which might result in Sweden being driven out of the big profitable world markets, which in its turn in the long run could mean the death blow to the concerns.<sup>30</sup>

The producers of the electrical engineering industry, with ASEA that held a key position in the deliveries at the lead, showed themselves very much against the agreement, but also from LM Ericsson (telephone) Alfa Laval (turbines) and SKF came significant opposition. Their backlog of orders, at home as well as abroad, was so big that they were fully booked to capacity, as they claimed, for the next two or three years.

ASEA's managing director, Thorsten Ericsson, let Myrdal, Minister of Trade, know that his company was able to make only a small part of the requested deliveries and only under certain conditions such as by the government guaranteed supplies of raw materials and labour.

Myrdal grew furious and proposed in the government a number of solutions: a state owned electrical industry or the establishment of a daughter company in Sweden of foreign companies as Siemens, Brown Boveri or General Electric.<sup>31</sup>

The result of Myrdal's move was that ASEA on the fifth of July 1946 announced an extension of its production capacity. Apparently did Myrdal not believe the allegations otherwise he would not have proposed the establishment of a state owned company or a foreign subsidiary: they would have suffered in the same degree from the asserted fatal lack of materials and labour.

Already at the beginning of July 1946 Herbert Tingsten had started a campaign in Dagens Nyheter against the Ryssavtalet. Thorsten Ericsson and the bankers Marcus and Jacob Wallenberg who had substantial interests in ASEA, SKF and LM Ericsson had provided Tingsten with information.<sup>32</sup> Tingsten's campaign culminated in a scandal when he on the 22nd of October wrote an editorial called *The exposed lie* wherein he described Thorsten Ericsson's account of the meeting of the foreign committee where Myrdal had reflected on a possible solution for meeting the terms of the Ryssavtalet by inviting foreign companies to establish a subsidiary in Sweden.

Myrdal's move was absolutely contrary to what the government had promised the concerns: that it would not exercise pressure. The meetings of the foreign committee were secret so it was obvious that Tingsten had been informed by one of the committee members. From Tingsten's memoirs it appears that the matter was arranged by himself, Ericsson and Folkparti member John Bergvall as a kind of a last attempt to prevent ASEA's participation in the Ryssavtalet.<sup>33</sup> It is evident why an editor-in-chief as Tingsten, "paralyzed by an unreasonable fear of communism", was so opposed to the Ryssavtalet and it is equally obvious that he represented one of the first Cold Warriors in Sweden. It is also understandable why other conservative and liberal newspapers took an unwilling stand against the Ryssavtalet: They were, apart from their classical aversion to communism, also inspired by the industry which had intimate connections within the parties in which those newspapers had their political roots.

But it is much less clear why a concern as ASEA was so unwilling to do business with the Soviets. Erlander wondered in his memoirs:

"Could deliveries of electrical material of at the most hundred millions have played a conclusive role for ASEA? Were there other reasons that made it desirable for ASEA to abstain from deliveries?"<sup>34</sup>

Erlander has referred to the Ryssavtalet debate as the first sign of the emerging Cold War in Sweden. The Prime Minister's reflection was assailed by Ohlin in his memoirs as "poorly based speculations". The leader of the Folkpartiet believed on the contrary that the Swedish industry, by mouth of Marcus Wallenberg, had talked to Tingsten to calm him down because:

"The big companies are usually little interested in heavy conflicts with the country's government. They prefer to do the discussions in a more quiet way and preferably not in the columns of a paper."<sup>35</sup>

That is, of course, in general, quite right, but Wallenberg did certainly not inform Tingsten about Myrdal's proposal in the foreign committee to make him feel more at ease.

That Wallenberg informed the newspaperman Tingsten can hardly mean anything else than that he wanted to put the Erlander administration under pressure by revealing the utterances of Myrdal in the secret committee. What he wanted was to put the matter to the attention of the public and if possible upset the public opinion. He was not out after avoiding a debate. It was of course the other way round: he wanted a debate *and* he needed it.

It is evident that ASEA had good reasons for not being eager to do business with the Soviets but the burning question is of course: Why not? It can't be because of bad experiences in the past. On the contrary: The company had always been interested in trade agreements with the Soviets and in the thirties ASEA had even promoted the granting of both private and state credits to Stalin. In the second half of the twenties the Soviet Union had been the largest import foreign market for ASEA and the company had even become a concession for the manufacture of electric motors in Jaroslavl.<sup>36</sup> The Soviet Union was perceived as an enormous market with much promising export facilities. A few months after the conclusion of peace, in the summer of 1945, an OSS report concluded that the

"Swedish industry, the Government, and the Press regard the USSR as a natural market for Sweden and a potential source of many of the raw materials that Sweden needs."<sup>37</sup>

Even during the war when the Nazis stood before the gates of Leningrad and Kiew did the payments from Moscow to ASEA not stop despite the fact

"that there are not the slightest possibilities to be able to send something from Sweden to Russia. (..) Yesterday (..) came in almost one million crowns and a telegram from Moscow confirming that they intended to continue payments as per the contract and that the finished machines must be stored in Stockholm so that they can be transported as soon as possible."<sup>38</sup>

ASEA intended to carry on business according to an intercepted letter from the company to the Soviet trade delegation. The letter referred to a conference on which quantities were discussed that ASEA should deliver under 1944-1945.

However, due to many uncertain factors as for example transport facilities and raw materials a definitive agreement could as yet not be concluded.<sup>39</sup>

The behaviour of ASEA was, seen in the light of her positive experiences with Russia in the past, quite remarkable. And in retrospect the attitude of ASEA cannot be blamed either on meager profits on the Ryssavtalet. On the contrary: they were excellent. On her total deliveries of about 70 million Swedish Crowns the company did gain a profit of approximately 30 million.<sup>40</sup>

ASEA's asserted inability of carrying out the deliveries to the Soviet Union within the frame of the Ryssavtalet was brought up for discussions in

the First Chamber of the Riksdag. It was observed that the company, after having agreed to take her share in the deliveries

"had devoted itself to very extensive speculations and negotiations about further deliveries to other countries. That does not point to the fact that the production capacity of the company should be exhausted by the engagements it has assumed on account of the Russian trade agreement."<sup>41</sup>

And Minister of Trade, Gunnar Myrdal, remarked at the same occasion in the First Chamber that ASEA was

"an industry which according to my opinion and I believe to the opinion of all the experts has a specially good market, not only in the Soviet Union, to which country it for a long time past has been a supplier, and Poland but in whole Eastern Europe. (..) ASEA is after all a company that will have considerable difficulties to meet her moral obligations which she has accepted not only through the information which the company furnished to the Export Association and Industry Commission which passed them to the Russian negotiators, but which were also given during the companies direct negotiations with the Russians. ASEA's difficulties are caused among others because the company received new orders from different sides and are further caused by ASEA's special difficulties with regard to labour."<sup>42</sup>

Undén became confused of ASEA's behaviour. During a meeting with managing director Ericsson Undén was given an extensive lecture about the difficulties of the company: shortage of labour, raw materials etc. But when the meeting was over Ericsson had gone straight over to Myrdal

"and informed him that ASEA negotiated with Poland about a 60 million contract for the electrifying of Warsaw! He does not seem to notice the contradiction in proportion to the planned Russian orders."<sup>43</sup>

It is not totally clear why ASEA could not have produced the requested goods especially now she just had made agreements with LM Ericsson about the production and sales within the electrical industries.<sup>44</sup> Or does the ASEA case provide us with an example how the US bypassed the Swedish government and her course of neutrality by applying directly to private companies on which she could exert a certain degree of influence?<sup>45</sup>

## 2.5 The American protest note.

The USA disliked the Ryssavtalet because it was contrary to her desire to promote multilateral trade on a non-discriminatory basis. Sweden had to keep her trade open to all other countries. Washington was concerned about the long-term effects of bilateral agreements of an exclusive nature and presented on August 16, 1946 a note, reminding Stockholm that such agreements might have unfortunate consequences. In a note to Moscow the same general comments with regard to the consequences of such trade agreements were made.

Undén expressed a kind of polite surprise in his answer of August 29 1946 in which he reminded Washington of numerous official declarations expressing the Swedish devotion to the principles of multilateral trade. Sweden wished nothing else than a quick resumption of its foreign trade but in post war Europe such a

"policy had necessarily to be based upon a bilateral collaboration between Sweden and the various European nations with which it has commercial relations."

Undén concluded that Sweden

"must reserve to itself complete freedom of decision as to the opportuneness of concluding such bilateral agreements as well as of adhering to an eventual international commercial arrangement can hardly understand how the situation, being that set forth in the explanation given about Swedish commercial policy, can have given rise to conclusions of the sort contained in your Note."<sup>46</sup>

It is known however that Undén was more than "surprised" about the note and that the Americans were aware of the fact that he regarded the note as a form of pressure from the side of the USA. But what the Americans did not know was that Undén, anonymous, made fun of them. Referring to a Norwegian-American agreement, whereby the American had claimed the monopoly of transportation of goods Undén remarked

"We may hope that the Norwegian government (..) does not neglect to draw attention to this American defection from their high principles which they preach for us and other sinful people."<sup>47</sup>

Also the Soviet Government expressed its "utmost surprise" about the note



and informed Washington that she and, as she believed, the Swedish government as well

"do not feel the need to consult the administration of the USA about the advantages and disadvantages of the trade agreement. The government of the Soviet Union is the more surprised about the Contents of Your note, since the government of the US herself practice conclusioning of long-term bilateral credit and trade agreements regarding the providing of credits directly or through the Export-Import Bank for purchasing of American goods(..) In this connection can your interpretation of the projected trade agreement between the Soviet Union and Sweden only be understood as an attempt to American interference in trade negotiations between two sovereign states."<sup>48</sup>

Sweden had certainly not furnished the milliard credit to the Soviet Union to offer the Russians the opportunity to purchase goods elsewhere. The note came for Undén as a complete surprise -State Department had before hardly mentioned the Swedish Soviet negotiations- and he considered the matter serious enough to call home the envoy in Washington, Herman Eriksson, for consultation.

Before the latter flew to Stockholm he had a meeting with Clayton, Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs, who told him that the note should not be seen as a protest but preferably as a kind of "friendly representation",<sup>49</sup> a kind of friendly advise to Sweden not to tie its exports for a long time to one country. Erikson was inclined to see the note as a kind of accident because recently the real decisionmakers at State Department had been elsewhere: Foreign Secretary Byrnes, Assistant Secretary James Dunn for European, Far and Near Eastern and African Affairs, Freeman Matthews, then Director of the Office of European Affairs, his deputy John Hickerson, Chief Division of Northern European Affairs Hugh Cumming, his assistant William Trimble as well as Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson.

Some lower officials at State, who were busy with the preparation for a multilateral trading system, which was to be worked out in the United Nations International Conference on Trade and Employment, had apparently become worried by the reports of Chris Ravndal, second man at the American Legation in Stockholm. Ingemar Hägglöf has characterized this Ravndal as an open and nice person but with a "weakness for conspiracy theories", a diplomat that "believed everything he heard" and who was convinced that

Sweden was "drifting to the East". Ravndal alleged that Soviet Ambassador Tjernychev, Kollontai's successor, had told him (in Febr. 1946) that the Soviets intended to drain so many goods from Sweden and to such low prices that the Swedish standard of living should sink to approximately that of the Soviet Union.<sup>50</sup> Ravndal was not the only man at the US legation who disliked the Swedish agreement with Moscow. Also his colleague Donald W. Smith, commercial attaché, resented the Ryssavtalet wholeheartedly and had told Herman Eriksson that the US administration disliked the credit agreement for practical reasons.<sup>51</sup> He probably did not talk on behalf of Washington because Dean Acheson has called the note "idiotic" and said that it never should have been sent if he had been in Washington.<sup>52</sup>

It is remarkable how hostile staff members at the American Legation in Stockholm acted vis à vis the Soviet Union, as early as 1946. It is not unlikely that State Department received much disinformation or at least little realistic information from their men in the Swedish capital as also was the case during the time of the Scandinavian Defence Union negotiations. A nice example of Donald Smith's way of communicating with State Department can be found in a report to the Secretary of State:

"Despite the support given to the proposed agreement in the officially inspired articles in Morgon Tidningen and in the communist press, it has been impossible to find a single person in favor of the agreement, aside from Government officials who are, of course, required to support the proposals."

Especially Minister Myrdal was to be blamed:

"Private persons are unanimous in their criticism, of Mr Myrdal who was accused of being a double-crossing, crooked, egotistical politician seeking personal power at the expense of his own political party's popularity. (..) These comments heard so often from Swedish industrialists, businessmen and bankers are, we believe, exaggerated."<sup>53</sup>

That the top of State Department disagreed with the officials who had prepared the note is hard to believe. It is more probable that State disliked the way they had expressed their displeasure because a note could in the given circumstances hardly expected to be effectful. Rather the contrary. From the diplomatic point of view the note was an ill considered action because the reactions from Moscow and Stockholm were, as could have been foreseen, quite predictable.

Early in the autumn of 1946 the first rumours appeared that the USA should refuse to deliver raw materials, semi manufactures and machinery to Sweden if they should be used to fullfil the provisions of the Credit Agreement appeared.<sup>54</sup> That American unwillingness, a kind of embargo policy *avant la lettre*, was another factor that contributed to the ultimate failure of the Ryssavtalet.

## 2.6 The failure of the credit.

The Soviet Union did not use more than 517 million Swedish crowns although she was in urgent need of Western currency and despite the very favourable conditions of the agreement.

That is even more remarkable in the light of the fact that Moscow in the drawing period, 1947-1952, was not able to obtain credits anywhere else in the West. Ingemar Häggglöf has observed that literally everything contributed to the failure: from economical conditions at home as well as abroad to world politics. Moreover there had been many mistakes made. Furthermore, according to this diplomat, it was an illusion to think that extended trade relations with the Soviet Union automatically should lead to good political relations. Undén, Myrdal and Wigforss, the most responsible in the government for the Ryssavtalet, refused, according to Häggglöf, to face reality: they were building their expectations on illusions.

Also Rolf Sohlman, their closest advisor and a man who, according to Häggglöf, had made his "lifework" of the Soviet Union had been too much engaged.<sup>55</sup> It is little realistic to blame the above mentioned ministers and their advisor for the fact that Moscow used only half of the credit.

It was not on account of their supposed illusory view that the Soviets showed "a rather faint interest for the trade with Sweden."<sup>56</sup> It is more likely that the failure, among other things, had more to do with the unreasonably high prices that certain Swedish manufacturers demanded for their products, which lay much above the prices at the world markets.

Already in 1947 did Ambassador Tjernychev make complaints about those prices during a conversation with a member of Parliament.<sup>57</sup> An order for ASEA locomotives was cancelled because the price was 100 % too high. The Soviet Union had bought hundreds of locomotives in other countries for half the price of what ASEA had charged.<sup>58</sup> Backgrounds for these extraordinary

prices might have been, as the historian of the embargo policy Adler-Karlsson has suggested, the unwillingness of the companies to export to the East. The companies asserted that their order-books were fully booked up and that no delivery capacity was left for exports to the East.<sup>59</sup>

In the period 1947-1952 Swedish exports to the Soviet Union remained each year consistently below the expected level which was always calculated late in the preceding year. At the same time the Swedish import figures showed a surplus so that the trade development cannot be explained by a failure of Moscow "to find export commodities demanded by Sweden combined with attempts at bilateral balancing"<sup>60</sup> as Adler-Karlsson has observed. Apart from the reasons mentioned here above the following reasons, which all may be part of the explanation for the Ryssavtalet, can be found:

- The Soviets used the Ryssavtalet as a showpiece in their credit negotiations with other Western countries.
- Moscow had never the intention to use more than half of the credit
- Stalin expected a serious economic depression in the West and by postponing the purchases to the last year of the agreement the Swedes would, because of the crisis have lowered their prices to a more realistic level. At the other hand: when the depression not should come in the drawing period, it would come in the period of repayment which might make repayments in deflated currency quite expensive.
- Stockholm found it to its advantage not to stimulate the trade with Eastern Europe. The expected depression did not come and Sweden preferred also to follow a similar course as the West
- Under the embargo regulations of the US it would not have been possible to ship certain commodities (as f.ex. roller and ball bearings) to the Soviet Union.<sup>61</sup> Oppositionleader Ohlin blamed it exclusively on the rise in prices: "Because of the increase in prices the deliveries became quantitative considerably less than half of the planning."<sup>62</sup>

Ohlin did not, like Erlander, pay any attention to the effects of the rising Cold War and accused Erlander of "peculiar reflections"<sup>63</sup> when the latter tried to analyze the influence of the upcoming Cold War on the failure of the credit and trade agreement.

The failure of the Credit and Trade Agreement can certainly not exclusively be blamed on the Cold War but it can neither be denied that the strained East-West relations played their own important part.<sup>64</sup>

## CHAPTER 3. MARSHALL AID. NOT ONLY FOR THE DOLLARS.

"Now the Marshall Plan changed quickly into an instrument of the Cold War." Tage Erlander, 1973.

"Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos." George C. Marshall. June 5 1947.

### 3.1 Backgrounds and history.

The Marshall Plan did not, as Erlander asserted in retrospect, change into an instrument of the Cold War. It was in fact created as an instrument of the Cold War.

Marshall Aid was a weapon against communism while it at the same time was aimed at the safeguarding of capitalism. It was not Marshall himself but his Undersecretary of State, Dean Acheson, who originated chiefly the idea of an aid-program for Europe, which was, according to Washington, on the brink of economic collapse. And it was also Acheson who presented the idea to the public in a speech at Cleveland, Mississippi, on May 8 1947.

It had been planned that president Truman should deliver the speech but he had other commitments and Acheson substituted for him but did not, being Under Secretary, receive much attention. On June 5 1947 the plan was presented for the second time, now by the Secretary of State, Marshall, at Harvard University in a commencement address. Marshall had been influenced during his seven weeks stay at the Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow (March 10 - April 24) by the Soviet attitude towards Western Europe. The talks about a common policy towards the defeated Germany had been a complete failure and Marshall had from his Soviet colleague got the impression that Stalin was not averse to chaos and economic collapse in Western Europe.<sup>1</sup> In his address Marshall described the situation in Europe and said that

"before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by the Government. It would neither be fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to

draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. (..) The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all European nations."<sup>2</sup>

Although Marshall had emphasized that the US policy was not directed "against any country or doctrine" it was nevertheless evident that he did not want to join the Soviets in what should become the European Recovery Program (ERP). He only did not say it in so many words. It needs hardly any explanation that Moscow could not accept a program which was entirely based on Western terms, to say nothing of the fact that for the Kremlin the treatment of Europe as one economic entity was completely out of the question. Alan Milward remarks in his monumental *Reconstruction of Western Europe* that

"A surprising number of historians are reluctant to admit that Marshall and the State Department wished to exclude the Soviet Union rather than merely wishing not to be seen to have excluded it."<sup>3</sup>

The open invitation was nothing more than a ploy: Washington did not wish to be regarded as the power that had divided Europe because that would have caused serious political problems in Western Europe. Truman boasted in his memoirs that

"For the first time in the history of the world a victor was willing to restore the vanquished as well as to help its allies."

At the same time he blamed the Soviet Union for taking "the conqueror's approach to victory". Europe was not only to be saved from economic disaster but it should also be lifted "from the shadow of enslavement by Russian Communism." The American president had a feeling that

"beyond economic considerations, the idea of cooperation would stimulate new hope and confidence among the nations of Europe and thus provide a realistic argument against the Communists' counsel of despair."<sup>4</sup>

Milward concludes that the purpose of Marshall Aid was the development of a bloc of nations that:

"would share similar political, social, economic and cultural values to those which the United States itself publicly valued and claimed to uphold."

Undén was, after having analyzed the American aid program with Gunnar Myrdal, convinced that Marshall and the American administration basically wanted an

"entirely West European economic bloc. But a pushing away of the Soviets and Eastern Europe would make the connection of England and France to the plan impossible."<sup>5</sup>

Sixteen months later Undén met Marshall at the Paris Conference where the latter told him that he wanted the Soviets to join the plan. According to Undén his partner did not pay any attention to his part of the conversation, in that way it got the character of two monologues.<sup>6</sup>

The historian LaFeber has observed that the joining of the Soviets would have become too expensive and that the Marshall Plan could not be separated from the anti-communist Truman doctrine: they were "two halves of the same Walnut." American policy makers have described the Marshall Plan as "a Truman Doctrine in Action" but emphasized that any connection between economic and military aid was to be avoided.<sup>7</sup>

The Marshall Aid had two components which in fact could not be separated: a political one and an economical one. Like before in the First World it was the threat of an imminent political and economical collapse of Europe that drew the Americans over the Atlantic. The advance of Communism had to be stopped and an economic environment favourable to capitalism had to be created, or, rather be safeguarded.

Western Europe should develop into a bloc of states with roughly the same political, economical, social and cultural values, very similar to those of the United States; these values of the so called "free world" were the best guarantee for the continuation of the American way of democracy. It had not so much to do with a fear of an overhanging depression in the USA because the export surplus of America to Europe was in the first two years after the war no more than a meager 2 percent of the US gross national product. And of course the Marshall Aid was an alternative for the German question.

East and West could not come to terms on the German future. A solution had to be found quickly because of the excessive expenses of the occupation. The breaking point were the Reparation Payments (agreed at Yalta) which the Soviets needed for the rebuilding of the shattered Russian economy. They needed it all the more after Truman had abruptly cut off Lend Lease and ignored their request for a reconstruction loan for rebuilding their economy.

The Lend Lease Act dated from 1941 and supplied the US allies material assistance to win the war; after the war it aided the economic recovery.

The USA now declared that a revival of Europe was not possible without an economically vital Germany. Marshall Aid would replace German reparations and Germany would be integrated into the West. That was quite different from what the Soviets had in mind. What they wanted was a Germany, controlled by the victors of the Second World War, and not a rebuild (West) Germany under the guidance of the United States.

Stalin desired also a "unified" Germany, but unified in the sense that Germany was treated as a single economic unit from which he could extract reparations. Also from the Western zones which meant that he could draw upon the industrial power of the Ruhr area. And at the same time he would be more able to prevent the birth of a strong, West oriented Germany.

The Marshall Plan with its economic and political components had far reaching implications for Europe and helped splitting the Old World into two parts. What were the reasons for Sweden to accept this, seen from a neutrality point of view, controversial aid?

### **3.2 Swedish neutrality and Marshall Aid.**

From the beginning the Marshall Aid had been a controversial issue between East and West. Moscow was suspicious with regard to the American intentions and did not believe in US altruism. The Kremlin's first reaction on Marshall's announcement was delayed until June 16 when the *Pravda* wrote that the Plan was nothing else than a Truman doctrine in disguise: an instrument for political pressure by means of dollars.

Despite this criticism Foreign Minister Molotov accepted a British-French invitation to discuss the Plan and left for Paris with not less than 90 advisors. Although the Soviets needed the money very badly they were back in Moscow within a week because they could not accept the terms which in their view were a direct interference in the internal affairs of other states. But nonetheless sixteen West European countries, among them Sweden, gathered in Paris in the summer of 1948 to organize a general committee, the Committee of European Economic Cooperation (C.E.E.C) and some subcommittees which began to prepare a plan for the economic recovery of Europe.

The Marshall Plan was for Stockholm the first major foreign issue after Sweden's entry into the UN. The Swedes were well aware of the many pitfalls



and dangers of foreign interference in their home affairs which were connected to the acceptance of Marshall Aid. Especially the Counter Part funds were a thorn in the flesh because through these funds Washington could exercise a direct influence on the economy of the participating countries.

A separate government agency for the administration of the Aid, the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) was set up with Paul G. Hoffman as director. The ECA required from the participating nations that they set up funds in their own local currency equal to the amount of dollars received. Those funds could only be used with the consent of the US. The result was not only that Washington could control how their dollars were spent but at the same time the Americans had the possibility to control how the equivalent amount of the local currency was used. The receiving countries agreed also to furnish the US with the information that was necessary for planning and carrying out the Plan. The Swedes experienced the US demands for information as indeed "exceedingly detailed". The Americans wanted exact information about their production and consumption, their im- and exports of "selected items" to all the countries concerned. Washington wanted the information fast and even supplied instructions for the filling in of the questionnaires.<sup>8</sup>

US Ambassador Freeman Matthews considered the Marshall Aid, and definitively not without reason, as an excellent opportunity to tie Sweden to the West:

"However much Undén may publicly proclaim that ERP is economic and not political the closer Sweden is associated with it the more it will gradually be tied to the West whether the government likes it or not."

The tying up of Sweden and Switzerland to the West was considered to be important: if not for economic reasons, then at least for political and psychological ones.<sup>9</sup> Publicly Undén did indeed claim that the Marshall Aid was 100% economic and that it had no political implications whatsoever. That was also what Undén told the gathered Swedish correspondents in Paris on the 15th of March 1948. At that press conference he assured the journalists that Marshall Aid in no way was allowed to influence his absolute neutrality line. Undén's utterances induced the newspaper *Expressen* to some critical remarks. The paper wondered what he meant with his *neutralité à la suédoise*. According to *Expressen* it was the same kind of neutrality which was practiced in the era 1940 - 1945 and

"which among others allowed that foreign soldiers travelled through the country and that the foreign policy was adapted to the Great Power that the state-and military leaders believed should win the war."<sup>10</sup>

What did Undén really think about the Marshall Plan and how did the government and opposition look at it? Not all the members in the Social Democratic Party agreed even if the executive committee accepted the statement of the International Socialistic Conference in Paris ((April 24-25 1948) and drew the conclusion that the party

"can agree with the main thought of the resolution without wanting to tie itself to every particular formulation."

Sweden supported wholeheartedly the economic cooperation of the European countries within the frame of the Marshall Plan and showed interest in an extended economical cooperation

"within the frame of the European Marshall organization and the UN economical European commission."

Military cooperation however was absolutely out of the question.<sup>11</sup> The prominent party member and former Foreign Minister, Rickard Sandler, argued that the Swedish joining of the Marshall conference in Paris could help to prevent that the Aid would be tied up to economic and political conditions which were dictated by the US. On the other hand he foresaw that the conference could extend the gap between East and West. The minister of Social Affairs, Gustav Möller, agreed with Sandler that Marshall Aid was not to be politicized but saw no reason for Sweden not to join, otherwise it could look as if Sweden choose for the Eastern side. The opposite was of course as much choosing side but he seemed not have been bothered by that.

The international secretary of the SDP, Kaj Björk, pointed out that Switzerland had shown itself rather uninterested because of its neutral status. At the end of the meeting Sandler said once again that the Soviets should consider Sweden as being engaged with the West if it should join the Paris meeting.<sup>12</sup> Also P.E Sköld, Minister of Agriculture, doubted if it was wise to accept Marshall Aid because of the hold that the US should get on Sweden and advised to contact Switzerland.<sup>13</sup>

Also in the foreign committee the social democrats expressed great doubts with regard to the conditions of Marshall Aid.<sup>14</sup> Apart from the very much opposed Counterpart funds there was also the much discussed Article X which

could be interpreted so that Washington could require the European nations to consult with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) -if they thought it necessary to do so- about alterations in the rate of exchange of their own national currency. The greatest objection was that the US in the future could force through a devaluation of the European currencies against the dollar. The text of article X did also cause the Swedish government a lot of trouble and it was discussed if it was

"advisable to tie itself inextricably in such commitments especially since OEEC may have progressively greater political implications."<sup>15</sup>

After much deliberation the Americans dropped the article but in the meantime Article X could be tied to the US by accepting Marshall Aid.

One also observed the relation between the embargo policy and the acceptance of Marshall Aid. On March 30 1948, the House of Representatives in Washington discussed the proposal of one of its representatives, Mundt, the so called Mundt Amendment. Mundt's proposal was directed against the Soviet Union and he called it "just sheer, utter nonsense and folly" to give economic aid to Europe, that was meant to protect the Western world against communism and at the same time not to forbid those countries the export of important materials to the Soviet Union.

"Satan must be roosting in our brains to so confuse our thinking" said one of the men who voted in favour of this amendment.<sup>16</sup> There was much opposition to the amendment but it was despite of that incorporated in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948 as section 117 (d). Two lists, 1A and 1B, with strategic materials which were forbidden to sell to the Soviet Union were drawn up. Those lists were seen as direct threats in Stockholm (and also in Bern) to their policy of neutrality, and caused much discussions as we shall see in Chapter 8.

In the light of this it is obvious that the Marshall Aid caused the government in Stockholm rather big troubles. Was their neutrality not in danger and was the Marshall Aid in fact not an extension of the Truman doctrine, as for example the Swedish communists, but also the Soviet Union<sup>17</sup>, asserted? How extensive would the US influence on the Swedish economy become and last but not least: what would be the reaction of the Soviets who themselves had rejected the Aid and moreover had ordered the East European countries and Finland to do the same? As I already showed above the Swedish government was well aware of all the ins and outs of the ERP. That seems

not to have been the case with the opposition leader Bertil Ohlin who put himself without reservation behind the ERP. "He had no sense of hesitations because of American control" Undén observed and reading Ohlin's memoirs one can only confirm the correctness on Undén's remark.<sup>18</sup> It shows at the same time that Undén himself was worried about the implications that the Marshall Aid might have on Swedish politics.

The Farmer's League (Bondeförbundet)<sup>19</sup> voted also almost unanimous for the Marshall Plan and so did the conservatives (Högerpartiet).<sup>20</sup> Quite contrary reacted the communists and going through their arguments, one is inclined to call them revisionists *avant la lettre*. Sweden was out on a dangerous way:

"They who have thought out this plan cannot hid their intentions to forge economically and military the Marshall states together to future crisis- and crisiscommunities with the USA. The Marshall Plan presupposes a close American control over the economic life of the participating countries and their currency, price, wage and social politics."<sup>21</sup>

During a radio discussion in September 1948 (election year) Hilding Hagberg, the party leader of the Swedish communist party remarked that:

"The Marshall agreement was not yet a military alliance, but they build up a political bloc which can be the first step to a military alliance."<sup>22</sup>

In his pamphlet *Marshallplanen, Västblocket och Sverige* (1948) Hagberg said exactly what LaFeber should express about 25 years later when he remarked that the Marshall Aid and the Truman doctrine were "two parts of the same Walnut".

Undén accused the communists of having already at an early stage politicized the Marshall Aid and claimed once again that the Marshall Plan was a purely economic action on the part of Washington.<sup>23</sup> It is certain that Undén and the Swedish government did not themselves believe what they said in public about the Aid being something purely economic. Such statements were for home consumption and were of course also made with an eye to Moscow. The real reasons for their acceptance were in fact purely pragmatic.

Even if the economy of Sweden had suffered a setback during the War, among others because of the blockade, Sweden's economic position in 1945 was quite favourable, certainly compared with that of most West European countries. The country had even been able to grant credits to Denmark,

Norway, the Soviet Union and a number of other European countries. After the war the United States replaced the defeated Germany as one of Sweden's main suppliers of many basic commodities. Receipts derived from export surpluses to other countries were not convertible into American dollars and for that reason Sweden found herself confronted with a serious dollar problem.

This shortage of dollars had in March 1947 grown so seriously that the Swedish Government introduced extensive import controls. The Swedish reserves of gold and foreign currency had gradually been reduced to a minimum level and Sweden's ambition in the field of foreign trade was principally to reach an equilibrium between exports and imports, especially in relation to the dollar area. Therefore special attention was given to facilitate the increase of exports to the Western Hemisphere. About 90 % of the traditional Swedish export products to the US consisted of pulp, paper and iron ore. Now heavy efforts were made to expand those quantities but there were also efforts to develop markets for other, more specialized products.

The American export drive was supplemented by measures which were designed to limit the exports from the dollar area to such commodities which were essential for maintaining and increasing production, mainly machinery and spare parts, chemicals and petroleum products. The success of the Swedish program, i.e. the achievement of an external and internal equilibrium, depended to a large extent upon successful cooperation between the West European countries, especially those which were later to cooperate within the Organization for European Economic Cooperation.

In short: Sweden needed the USA and was very much dependent on Washington, not only because of the products it imported from across the Atlantic but also because of the growing US influence in Western Europe after the introduction of the Marshall Plan. The growing US influence was of course at odds with Undén's line of policy and that was exactly the reason why he actually was not in favour of a *common* plan for the recovery of Europe. Undén rather preferred the "shopping list" approach which meant that the various European countries delivered a list in Washington with the products they needed.

The Marshall Plan did not change the Swedish economy as Axel Gjöres, Minister of Commerce, has argued.<sup>24</sup> Sweden's acceptance of the Marshall

Plan did neither imply that the country fell victim to a kind of "dollar slavery" as *Tiden*, a leading social democratic periodical, concluded.<sup>25</sup> The amount of dollars that Sweden received was simply too small for becoming enslaved. The Paris Convention of April 16 1948 on European Economic Cooperation was ratified by Sweden on June 30, 1948 and on July 3 a bilateral Economic Cooperation Agreement between the US and Sweden was concluded and ratified by the Erlander government on July 21.

It was agreed that Sweden would not receive financial aid in the form of grants, but only in the form of loans. Sweden received for the budget year 1948-1949 a credit of only 22 million dollars, an amount which was not likely to have a profound effect on the Swedish economy. But it enabled Sweden to maintain a corresponding portion of its dollar imports which otherwise would have been impossible if Sweden wanted to achieve a balance in the dollar trade.

Thanks to the ECA credits Sweden was able to import certain machinery and raw materials which were essential for the maintaining and increasing of the Swedish industrial production.<sup>26</sup>

In the light of what is said above it cannot be argued that Sweden accepted the ERP only for the sake of the dollars. Actually to Stockholm the flow of dollars to the impoverished and economical crippled Western Europe was the major reason because the recovery of Europe was a *conditio sine qua non* for Swedish economy. A healthy and recovered European economy served the Swedish interests best because it would be able to buy its products. Both Erlander and Undén were convinced of that.<sup>27</sup>

More than once the Erlander government pointed out that Marshall Aid in their eyes was nothing else but a purely economic matter. But that statement also is only a part of the truth. The real question was: Could Sweden refuse the Marshall Aid? The answer is "no". The relations with Washington were, for several reasons not very good. The Swedish conduct in the Second World War was still not forgotten. The Americans abhorred the Credit and Trade Agreement with Russia and did neither like the Swedish stand with regard to the American embargo policy. Sweden was cooperative but not for hundred percent as the US government demanded.<sup>28</sup>

The Swedish behaviour in the UN had been a thorn in the flesh and finally there was the negative Swedish standpoint with regard to the Western

defence pact, the future NATO. Undén committed to his diary that "a refusal should be very much resented and be considered as a demonstration."<sup>29</sup> Acceptance stood for goodwill from the side of the USA while refusal at the other hand could become identical with serious political consequences.

Summarizing: Sweden could simply not afford to say "no" to the Marshall Plan. Not for the sake of her trade with Western Europe and the USA and neither because of the political consequences that a refusal might have. The acceptance was principally symbolic. Also Sven Andersson, then party secretary of the SDP, has called the acceptance "symbolic" and not of substantial interest for the economy of Sweden. He did not, and neither did he some forty years later, consider the acceptance as a departure from neutrality.<sup>30</sup>

Gunnar Myrdal's conviction that an economic depression should hit the Western World seems also to have played a part in the Swedish considerations<sup>31</sup> and so did the communist coupe in Prague on February 25 1948. The rising anti-communist wave certainly influenced the decisionmaking in Sweden. The acceptance of Marshall dollars may, in the light of the actual developments in Europe, also be perceived as a clear signal to the Western world: it left no place for doubt where Sweden, neutral or not, stood ideologically.

Europe was in great upheaval after the events in Prague and the reactions in Washington were close to hysteria. It was at that time that General Clay, the United States Chief of the Military Government in Germany, cabled from Berlin to Washington that he had the feeling that war "may come with dramatic suddenness."<sup>32</sup> Although the general's feeling soon passed away, the administration in Washington did not waste any time and took advantage of the war scare to persuade the Congress, which had until that time been rather unwilling to provide dollars for the Marshall Plan and rearmament. President Truman desperately needed a crisis to sell the Plan to the Congress and from that point of view the coup in Czechoslovakia was nothing less than a gift from Providence.

Of course the rejection of the Soviet Union of the Marshall Plan played a certain role in the Swedish capital but Undén did not think that the Swedish acceptance had shattered the Soviets' confidence in his neutrality line<sup>33</sup> and Sohlman confirmed this. The Soviets certainly criticized the Swedish acceptance but also showed understanding for the step.<sup>34</sup> The Soviets probably knew this was the best they could hope as far as Sweden was concerned. Undén explained to ambassador Tjernychev that he considered the Marshall

Plan necessary for the economic recovery of Europe.<sup>35</sup> It is remarkable that Ivar Anderson, editor-in-chief of Svenska Dagbladet and a Conservative member of the foreign committee in the Riksdag, was of the opinion, that Undén (and Wigforss) were heavily influenced by the Soviet campaign against the Marshall Plan and that he showed an "an increasing anti-America attitude".<sup>36</sup>

Undén was not anti America but neither did he take a pronounced positive attitude towards Washington. The same can be said with regard to Undén's attitude to Moscow. Undén just followed his policy of neutrality. The Marshall dollars could to a certain extent increase the US influence but they did not cause a departure from neutrality.

### 3.3. Scandinavia and Marshall Aid.

How did the other two Scandinavian countries react to the Marshall Plan? The story of Denmark and Norway differs not much from that of Sweden. All three were unwilling to abandon their policy of neutrality and bridgebuilding. They were also afraid of the political implications which the ERP might bring about. That's why they put, with an eye at the public, all the weight on the economical aspect which was not considered to be contrary to the concept of neutrality.

Things became more complicated when the Soviets under the guidance of Molotov, demonstratively walked out of the Paris Conference in the summer of 1947. Lange and Undén had discussed what they should do if the Soviets should abandon the Paris Conference but they had quickly come to the conclusion that there could be no reason for them to do the same.<sup>37</sup>

The Scandinavian bridgebuilding policy was in practice not so active as the word itself suggests. It was in fact even a rather passive policy whereby problems were avoided by not taking sides in disputes between the Great Powers.<sup>38</sup> But the acceptance of Marshall Aid was considered to be a choice for one of the blocs, especially after the Soviets had left the Paris Conference<sup>39</sup> and were convinced that the Plan was only the economical component of a US plan for the militarization of Europe<sup>40</sup>.

A significant difference between Sweden on the one hand and Denmark and Norway at the other was that the last two had suffered from the war and simply needed the dollars badly. That was especially true for Denmark which was in such a bad foreign exchange position that it in fact had no



other choice than to join. All three were aware that the Marshall Aid might be the first step towards the establishment of a Western political or even military bloc which at the time of the announcement of the Marshall Plan (1947), was absolutely incompatible with the official foreign policy of the three. For that reason the economic character of the ERP was publicly emphasized.<sup>41</sup>

Oslo even sent a team of economic experts to Paris, to underline that it considered the Plan as purely economic.<sup>42</sup> All three countries preferred the "shopping list" strategy which in fact was quite similar to what the Soviets had proposed. The Conference of the Northern Cooperation Committee in Stockholm on February 7 and 8 1948 resulted in a resolution in which they agreed to take part in the Marshall Plan for purely economical reasons.<sup>43</sup> It was in the light of their official neutrality policy the only acceptable motivation.

The ultimate choice of Scandinavia had been determined by economic reasons even if the arguments of the Swedes (goodwill, recovery of Europe) were different from those of Norway and Denmark. But their choice had also political implications which soon became evident, not only in relation to the US embargo policy<sup>44</sup> but also with regard to the establishment of NATO. US ambassador Marvel in Copenhagen warned the Danish Foreign Minister as early as September 1948 that he should not be sure of Marshall Aid if he did not demonstrate enough cooperation towards a Western military pact.<sup>45</sup>

## **CHAPTER 4. THE GROWING TENSIONS OF 1948: THE PRELUDE TO UNDÉN'S PROPOSAL.**

The year of 1948 was loaded with events. The first spectacular occurrence was the Western Union speech of the English Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, which via the Brussels Pact, would lead to the creation of Nato in April 1949. Other events that sent real shockwaves through the Western world were the communist coup in Prague (February) and the Berlin Crisis in June.<sup>1</sup>

Also in Scandinavia these incidents caused much stir in the public opinion but what frightened the Scandinavians most was the Treaty of Friendship-Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Finland and the Soviet Union. It was suspected to be dictated by Stalin to Helsinki and soon after the announcement of the Treaty a wave of rumours about malicious Soviet intentions with regard to Scandinavia swept over Northern Europe. The Cold War intensified and times grew rough for members of the communist party and other leftwingers, suspected as they were of evil intentions with regard to democracy. Discussions about the defence of Western Europe started and resulted eventually in the birth of Nato. Roughly at the same time the Scandinavian states started negotiations about a Scandinavian Defence Union. Those talks broke down definitively in January 1949, three months before the establishment of Nato.

### **4.1. The situation in Europe round 1948 and the Bevin Speech.**

During the Conferences of Yalta (Febr. 1945) and Potsdam (July - August, 1945) it was decided by the Soviet Union, the USA and Great Britain that a council of Foreign Ministers should be established to deal with post-war problems. Also the Foreign Minister of France became a member of the Council where the main task was to try and find a solution to the German problem. But an agreement on a joint policy with regard to Germany was never reached. The imminent break between East and West could already be discerned in Potsdam. It became manifest with the declaration of the Truman doctrine and the Marshall Plan which was answered by the Soviets with the establishment of the Cominform and an economic aid program for the states of Eastern Europe which, under pressure from Moscow, did not take part in the Marshall Plan.

From that moment on Europe was split into two blocs. The Council of Foreign Ministers in London in December 1947 was the last of a series of five and broke down when a solution for Germany, the central issue, appeared to be out of reach.

Already on 5 March, 1946, Churchill had in his "Iron Curtain" speech spoken of an association of the English speaking nations, but -until the Foreign Ministers Conference broke down in London- the thought was not further elaborated. However on the same day the Ministers Conference in London failed, Bevin proposed to his American colleague Marshall

"the formation of some form of union, formal or informal in character, in Western Europe backed by the United States and the Dominions".

There was already an Anglo-French military Pact in Europe, the Dunkirk Treaty, which could serve as a nucleus and starting point for a West European military pact against Eastern Europe.<sup>2</sup> The Dunkirk Treaty was said to be aimed against Germany but without doubt the signatories had the Soviet Union and not the defeated Germany in mind when they signed the Treaty in March, 1947.

Marshall's reaction was very cautious. Apparently he did not want to jeopardize the appropriation by Congress of his European Recovery Program.

On January 13, 1948 Marshall received a memorandum from Bevin where the British Foreign Minister informed his colleague about his plan to conclude treaties of alliance with the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. What Bevin wanted was a fast creation of a Western European alliance, soon to be extended into an Atlantic Pact. Western Europe alone was too weak to resist the eventual Soviet ambitions of expansion. Help from the USA was considered to be necessary.

On the 22nd of January 1948 Ernest Bevin delivered his "Western Union" speech in the House of Commons. Bevin was deliberately rather vague and the USA, the future pillar of the Western alliance, was not even mentioned.

"The time has come to think of ways and means of developing our relations with the Benelux countries, to begin talks with these countries in close concord with our French ally (Dunkirk Treaty g.a.). Yesterday our representatives in Brussels, The Hague, and Luxembourg were instructed to propose such talks. I hope treaties will be signed with the

Benelux countries making, with our treaty with France an important nucleus in Western Europe".

Bevin sharply criticised the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and concluded "that the free nations of Western Europe must now draw closely together (...). I believe the time is ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe".<sup>3</sup>

Bevin did not have to wait long before his proposals to the Benelux were honoured. Negotiations started on March 4, and only 13 days later, on March 17, the Treaty of Brussels was signed by France, England and the Benelux countries.

The central article of the Treaty was the fourth:

"If any of the High Contracting Parties should be the object of an armed attack in Europe, the other High Contracting Parties will, in accordance with the provisions of article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, afford the Party so attacked all the military and other aid and assistance in their power".<sup>4</sup>

The American support for Bevin's plan was restricted to words of understanding and sympathy but the coup in Czechoslovakia on 25 February provoked a change in the US attitude that Bevin needed. On March 11 Bevin approached the Americans anew with his plans for an Atlantic alliance and this time with considerably greater success. Marshall invited his English colleague to come to Washington and start negotiations as soon as possible.<sup>5</sup> Only Great Britain, the USA and Canada (France was considered a security risk) were present at the talks which were held in utmost secrecy and lasted from the 22nd of March to the 1st of April. One year later the NATO was established.<sup>6</sup> Did Bevin want to include the Scandinavian countries?

He did not mention them by name in his speech but the Scandinavian states were mentioned in an earlier draft of his address as possible members in a Western alliance but later left out again.<sup>7</sup> Hector Mc Neil, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, informed Boheman, Swedish minister in London, that Bevin had not mentioned the Scandinavian states "after ripe consideration and for not creating any difficulties in a delicate situation". Especially their relations with Moscow could, according to Mc Neil become uncomfortable. Nor were the Scandinavians informed of the speech beforehand. Later, Bevin should inform the British embassy in Stockholm that he wanted as many

nations as possible involved in his project and that he, with regard to Scandinavia, had considered an association for economic and cultural reasons.<sup>8</sup>

The fact that the Northern countries were not mentioned was indeed due to a "delicate situation" as Mc Neil had observed but in fact did that not refer to Scandinavia but to Great Britain which would have manoeuvred herself in an awkward position. London foresaw that Scandinavia would ask in how far the British could support them with military aid in case of a Soviet attack. The Danish and Norwegian military establishment had already asked that question in February and November 1947 but the Foreign Office had avoided to give a straight answer because it had, in fact, nothing or little to offer.<sup>9</sup> The Second World War had impoverished the country too much and moreover military weakness was obvious. A planned visit at the turn of the year (1947-1948) of the Swedish Commander in Chief, General Jung, in an effort to make the Swedes more interested in military cooperation with both Scandinavia and England, had for that reason been postponed because the English military did not want their weakness to be shown, afraid as they were "to discourage" general Jung. If it should become common knowledge that England

"had no plans at all to help them, they might go and make the best deal they could with the Russians to preserve themselves. This would be a great loss to us."<sup>10</sup>

So Bevin was not in the position to ask, or even to mention, the Scandinavians straight away in relation to his plan before he knew what the Americans had in mind. He did not know how big their material and financial support would be, if any. That situation would last until the coup in Prague. Soon after the overthrow of the government in Czechoslovakia Bevin informed Lange ( on March 15) that plans for an Atlantic Pact were going to be worked out. It was, in the light of the old British strategic interests in Norway, of course not by accident that Bevin started his campaign to draw Scandinavia into an Atlantic alliance in Oslo. The relations between the two countries had been long and intimate -Norway was considered to be the best most British oriented of the Northern States- and offered Bevin for that reason the best chances of success. Moreover the British Foreign Minister exercised a great personal influence on Lange.<sup>11</sup>

The *coup d'état* in Prague, the Finnish-Soviet Treaty as well as the "rumours" (see Chapter 4.5 and 4.6) played also their role in helping to

smooth the way for England's proposal to Norway to join the West and for the final positive answer to this question from the Norwegians.

#### 4.2. Reactions in Sweden.

Although Undén had not been notified beforehand of the Bevin speech the contents of the address cannot have been totally unfamiliar to him. Already on the 21st of November 1945 he had noted in his diary that there had been a question in the First Chamber of the Riksdag about

"an utterance of the English Foreign Minister Bevin concerning 'the Western Pact' and Sweden's standpoint."

Neither was Bevin's viewpoint on the "Russian menace" a surprise for Undén because the crownprince had informed him that he had personally heard from the English Foreign Minister that the Soviets were out after total power in Western Europe.<sup>12</sup> Yet Undén did not comment on Bevin's Western Union speech. In his diary, he restricted himself to a thickly underlined "Bevin's big speech in the House of Commons."<sup>13</sup>

In front of General Jung Undén expressed as his opinion that the Western Union speech ought to be seen against the background of the Marshall plan hearings in the American Congress. He emphasized that "the foreign policy attitude of the Swedish government was unchanged."<sup>14</sup>

In the same entry he criticized general Ljungdal for having said in Oslo that there was little chance that Sweden could stay out of a future war. Undén considered it not to be necessary to abandon

"the working hypothesis that we could stay out. If we consider that without any prospect of success, unnecessarily the next question is being provoked: on which side?"<sup>15</sup>

Also in the Riksdag there were no dissonant voices heard and there happened to be a general support for the policy of neutrality. The dissonants could however be heard in the press.<sup>16</sup>

Undén was quite sensitive of press comments, Swedish as well as foreign. With regard to the Western Union speech he showed little appraisal for the home editorials because most of the editors had, according to the minister not heard the speech themselves and "that's why they do not know what they are writing about."<sup>17</sup>

"War bloc takes shape" was the analysis of the communist paper Ny Dag on the 24th of January while one day later the influential Dagens Nyheter started a campaign against the official Swedish foreign policy and pleaded for an association with the West. Undén's greatest opponent in the press was once again Dagens Nyheter's editor-in-chief Herbert Tingsten who attacked the minister personally and with great venom. The day after Tingsten had started his campaign for a Swedish association with a Western bloc there appeared an anonymous editorial in the social democratic party paper Morgon Tidningen "The guardian of moral at Tegelbacken" (the head office of DN was situated at Tegelbacken in Stockholm) which should be the first of a (years) long series of editorials in which Undén anonymously crossed swords with his opponent at Dagens Nyheter.

Tingsten did not gain impressive support among the Swedish public but Undén was aware that that might change in the long run. One of Tingsten's colleagues at Dagens Nyheter, Johannes Wickmann, came one day to Undén to tell him that he was not responsible for Tingsten's views. Tingsten "was intelligent and good in his books 'but'", Wickmann remarked, "no politician."<sup>18</sup>

In an interview with Fleisher of the Columbia Broadcasting System and the New York Herald Tribune Undén asserted that he had not conceived the speech as an exhortation for the establishment of a military alliance in Western Europe.

Undén's memorandum on the interview continued:

"On the whole I had not analyzed or commented Mr Bevin's speech and I had no authoritative interpretation of it. The principal parts of my own speech were worked out several days before Mr. Bevin delivered his speech (...). The most important and specified point in Mr. Bevin's speech in my opinion was what he uttered about economic cooperation on the basis of the Marshall Plan between the sixteen states."<sup>19</sup>

Soon Undén should learn that Bevin had been vague on purpose but that he, if he wanted, could be "devastatingly clear". His purpose had primarily been to get reactions on his "offer" ("offer" was preferred above "Bevin plan") but England wanted as much support as possible. The offer to the Benelux had been of a military character but "with other countries one could think of an association on economic and cultural conditions." And London had not understood what Undén meant by talking about a "bloc".

Bevin had never aimed at a kind of "bloc building" in the sense of what normally was conceived with a "Eastern bloc".<sup>20</sup> Orme Sargent, Deputy Under-Secretary of State, had made clear to the Swedish Ambassador in London, Boheman, that association of Scandinavia was desirable if only to show West European solidarity, but he assured at the same time that Great Britain would not force the North into an alliance. He repeated that Bevin had not mentioned Scandinavia on purpose ("after ripe consideration") but

"The more extensive and comprehensive the European cooperation would be, the better it was with regard to the general attitude of the United States and in Western Europe's own understandable interest."<sup>21</sup>

As long as the American contribution, pending a (positive) American answer, was unclear, the British could not do much more than try to convince the Scandinavians of the advantages of membership or, if need be, of a Scandinavian bloc with close connections to the West. They were, in fact, paving the way for a Scandinavian association, in one way or another.<sup>22</sup> A similar strategy was followed by US Ambassador Matthews and his counsellor Cumming, let alone in a much less subtle way than the English.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4.3 The Danish and Norwegian reactions.<sup>24</sup>

Undén's reaction to the proposal of Bevin was negative and so was the Danish. On the third of February Prime Minister Hedtoft declared that Denmark wanted to stick to its policy of neutrality and did not want to join any kind of bloc.

The reactions from Norway were quite different. In his speech in the Norwegian parliament, the *Storting*, on the 12th of February, Halvard Lange said true enough "no" to Norway's joining of a bloc but it was less unconditional than Sweden's and Denmark's rejection. Lange's "no" could easily, so it was felt, turn into "yes". The Norwegian Foreign Minister claimed that Norway should follow its policy of neutrality as long as possible. But in case that war should become inescapable Norway should not hesitate to make its choice. Within the Norwegian social-democratic party, DNA, there were many, contrary to its sister parties in Denmark and Sweden, who had received Bevin's proposal with sympathy. They formed however not a majority.

The Norwegian reorientation, i.e. a more Western oriented policy at the cost of the bridgebuilding policy, could first be noticed in the internal discussions of the government in December 1947. The background was the



changed international situation. Churchill's Fulton Speech (1946) had exercised a real influence, especially when the situation that Churchill had drafted, in the eyes of the Norwegian government, became more and more real.

The Truman doctrine and the Soviet rejection of and agitation against the Marshall Plan had done the rest. Before Bevin's proposal there had simply not been a Western pact one could join.<sup>25</sup> In front of the Swedish ambassador in Oslo, Johan Beck-Friis, Lange did not conceal that Norway in the long run had to make a choice. But he did not want to do something before he had discussed the matter thoroughly with Undén. Beck-Friis also reported that his English colleague, Sir Laurence Collier, was satisfied with the opinion within the Norwegian government which appeared to be more and more inclined to join a Western Union in one way or another.

Undén's statement of the 4th of February, to stick to the old neutrality concept, was not well received in the Oslo governmental circles.<sup>26</sup> Very enlightening, with respect to the point of view of leading Norwegian statesmen regarding the Bevin Plan, is Beck-Friis' report of a conversation with Trygve Lie<sup>27</sup>, General Secretary of the UN and Lange's predecessor, on the 4th of February. Lie had declared that he did not believe in a Russian-American war in the foreseeable future and expressed as his opinion that Scandinavia certainly ought to join in some form of economic cooperation but to abstain from political and military obligations. He said he was astonished

"to find here in Norway an almost hysteric atmosphere concerning the Soviets. The Russians may be not to be trusted, but to establish politics on Russophobia could not be good (...). He told me in the strictest confidence, while urging me (...) to report to you (i.e. Undén) only in a personal letter that he at Lange's had had a meeting (...) with Gerhardsen and some bigwigs of the social democratic party. There he had given an account of his view on the situation and definitively advised against a Norwegian association to the Bevin plan, to the extent it implied political and military cooperation. When I (i.e. Beck-Friis) said, that I recently more and more had become convinced, that they (...) already more or less had made up their minds to join the Bevin plan in one form or another, he answered that that certainly was true but that he hoped, that he through his intervention had succeeded in changing the Norwegian view on that matter."

Only for that purpose he had travelled to Oslo but nobody had, during the meeting, adopted Lie's opinion. However he had been promised that his view should be discussed later. Lie had advised the closest cooperation with Sweden, also in military matters. Beck-Friis remarked that he had "got the impression" that Lie was of the opinion that both Gerhardsen and Lange were on his side. That surprised Beck-Friis because: "Lange's statements to me go, as is known, in another direction."<sup>28</sup> Beck-Friis was right and Lange approached in the Storting the Western Union speech with sympathy. He even said with some emphasis that Undén in his statement of February 4 not had acted on behalf of all the three Scandinavian states.

In the meantime however the Norwegians did not abandon their old neutrality course although Lange during a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Scandinavia (23 - 24 February) declared that he did not believe that Norway had much chance to stay outside a new war and that English military circles had advised him that the Norwegian coast in case of conflict had an "extraordinary great significance."<sup>29</sup> The impression in Stockholm was that Lange did not really mean what he said and that he did not want to say what he really had in mind.

#### 4.4. Soviet reactions.

The suspicions of Moscow had come true. For the Soviets the Bevin plan was nothing else than the proof that an economic bloc, constituted by the Marshall Plan states, logically should be followed by a military bloc. The navy newspaper *Krasnu Flot* warned the Scandinavian nations

"that the Russian government contemplated every bloc building, with or without the Bevin plan, as an aggressive threat in the first place aimed against the Soviet Union".

And an eventual Scandinavian bloc was just

"a ramification of Bevin's Western bloc, meant to build Europe into a military and economic base for American imperialism."<sup>30</sup>

Yet it seemed as if the Soviets were rather content with the official reactions from the Scandinavian capitals. The *Pravda* at least, the mouthpiece of the Kremlin, paid much attention to the negative reactions of Undén and Hedtoft. But on the other hand there was still a number of papers that continued to accuse the Scandinavians of having concluded a secret military alliance with the USA and Great Britain. The source of that allegation was

the Danish communist paper *Land og Folk* which argued that if the Northern Countries were not invited to participate in a Western Union, there must already be a secret engagement between them and the West.<sup>31</sup> The reason for those articles in the Soviet press, which differed clearly from the Pravda approach, might have been that the Kremlin, although not unsatisfied with the Northern reactions, also wanted to warn the North not to participate in a Western military bloc and that it neither was enthusiastic about an eventual Scandinavian alliance.

On the whole the Soviet press conducted an aggressive campaign against Sweden in the post war years.<sup>32</sup> Yet the relations of Undén with the Soviets were not bad. Ambassador Tjernychev came to see Undén, on 29 January 1948, and asked him directly if Bevin had also made a proposition to Sweden. Undén answered negative and said that he knew the plan only from what he had read in the newspapers. On the same occasion he assured Tjernychev that Sweden had not the slightest intention of joining a military pact and that he doubted that Bevin even had had such a pact in mind.<sup>33</sup>

Undén seems indeed to have been convinced that it was doubtful that Bevin aimed at the foundation of a military pact.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.5. Czechoslovakia and Finland.

The Bevin speech was only the first of a series of events in the turbulent spring of 1948. In Czechoslovakia the communists seized power on the 25th of February and two days later the Soviet-Finnish Friendship Treaty was announced. For the many scared Europeans the speech of the English Foreign Minister became a symbol of hope: A Western Union might be able to prevent the establishment of Soviet domination in Europe. But was the coup in Prague a genuine surprise? To the Western public opinion it has undoubtedly been a shock but it is also a fact that the policy makers in Washington practically already had written off the country. Secretary of State Marshall explained to his government on November 6, 1947 that:

"The halt in the communist advance is forcing Moscow to consolidate its hold on Eastern Europe. It will probably have to clamp down completely on Czechoslovakia, for a relatively free Czechoslovakia could become a threatening salient in Moscow's political position."

And he continued:

"As long as communist political power was advancing in Europe, it was advantageous to the Russians to allow to the Czechs the outer appearances of freedom. In this way, Czechoslovakia was able to serve as a bait for nations further west. Now that there is the danger of the political movement proceeding in the other directions, the Russians can no longer afford this luxury, Czechoslovakia could easily become a means of entry of really democratic forces into Eastern Europe in general. The sweeping away of democratic institutions and the consolidation of communist power in Czechoslovakia will add a formidable new element to the underground anti-communist political forces in the Soviet satellite area. For this reason, the Russians proceed to this step reluctantly. It is a purely defensive move."<sup>35</sup>

It seems that the Americans considered Czechoslovakia already a communist state before the *coup d' état* of February 25. To be sure, the communists enjoyed a far greater popular support in Czechoslovakia than anywhere else in Eastern Europe and at the elections of 1946 they had gained 37% of the votes but their popularity was on the wane in 1948.

Czechoslovakian requests for aid (1947) were turned down by the USA thereby giving the Soviet Union the impression that the West had already abandoned the country. Stalin profited from that situation and intervened, knowing that Western counter actions were unlikely. That does not mean of course that the West *wanted* a communist take over in Prague even if it served the plans for an Atlantic coalition quite well and could be used for the mobilization of the public opinion by those Western politicians who had proclaimed communism the greatest menace for mankind. President Truman and Marshall used Czechoslovakia to overcome the opposition to the European Recovery Program.<sup>36</sup>

What concerns us most are the reactions in Sweden. Erlander mentions the coup in his memoirs but he gives no comment. Undén showed himself surprised that it all had gone so quickly and relatively easily; surprised because the country possessed "a relatively free press and a politically matured class of workers."<sup>37</sup> Undén did mention the crisis in Prague in his diary and estimated it "growing seriously."<sup>38</sup> In the minutes of the various party committees there is nothing to be found on Prague. The Swedish

political parties were more interested in home politics. They were, as a matter of fact, quite *provincial* in their outlook.

But there were reactions from other sources than the party committees. The communist party did express itself positively with regard to the take over of power in Prague. The liberal leader Ohlin said that he was shocked<sup>39</sup> but that was usually the case when the Soviet Union was concerned.<sup>40</sup>

Swedish public opinion was shocked and the editorials of Sweden's leading newspapers display a similar state of mind. However, Czechoslovakia did not lead to a change of course in Swedish politics and neither the Norwegian Foreign Minister Lange intend, as he told Beck-Friis, to change his politics.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless did the English ambassador in Oslo, Collier, want to make use of the opportunity:

"if we want to bring Norway into the 'Bevin plan' now is the psychological moment to do it, when the Czechoslovak tragedy is still fresh in the public mind."<sup>42</sup>

With the announcement of the Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (TFCMA) on the 27th of February, only two days after the coup in Prague, the feelings of crisis and insecurity grew and it was generally felt that crisis and menace were now just across the border.

For Undén, the TFCMA came not as a surprise because it had been "in the air" since November of the preceding year.<sup>43</sup> But its history reached even further back. Already in 1938-1939 there had been secret discussions about a treaty between the two neighbour countries. Before the end of the Second World War, in January 1945, the Soviets had again brought forward the possibility of a defence pact and that suggestion was repeated again in May of that same year. This time directly to president Paasikivi. Also Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov discussed the matter with a Finnish delegation in November 1947. So the letter of Stalin to Paasikivi on the 22nd of February in which he suggested to start negotiations about a treaty of friendship and mutual assistance came hardly as a surprise.

Actually it was more surprising why the Soviets had not occupied Finland in the Second World War. They could have done so rather easily and without serious problems with the West because the Fins had, at the side of the Germans, waged war against them.<sup>44</sup> It was of course shocking for the Western public opinion, that Stalin's suggestion (the letter was announced to

the public on February 27) came two days after Czechoslovakia. His proposition, to establish a defence pact against eventual future German aggression, was generally regarded as a pretext.

Germany was divided, poor, disarmed and reduced to a country of ruins. Forgotten was that also the Treaty of Dunkirk was said to be aimed against Germany. Seen from Moscow the proposal was quite understandable. The Germans had attacked the Soviet Union over Finnish territory and Finland formed now, in 1948, a gap in the Soviet defence system. And in the view of the Soviets one of the aims of the Marshall Plan was the restoration of a Germany that would be a part or even a spearhead in a new anti-Soviet coalition. Stalin had not forgotten that Germany twice in his own lifetime, in ample 30 years, had attacked and destroyed great parts of Russia.

It was a surprise that the final text of the TFCMA of April 6, 1948, to a large extent corresponded with the text that the Fins themselves had originally proposed to Stalin and which was tailored to their own needs. Finland managed to maintain her independence in so far that is possible for small nations that border on a worldpower. The Soviets got the guarantee that Finland would not allow that her territory would be used as a spring-board for an attack on Russia. The big question remains why Stalin showed himself so moderate *vis à vis* Finland, especially because he was informed about the highly secret Pentagon talks, March 22 - April 1, 1948, which should lead to the establishment of NATO. Donald Maclean, a member of the British delegation in Washington, was a Soviet spy and kept his employer in Moscow informed.<sup>45</sup>

The public opinion was upset, when the news of Stalin's letter to Paasikivi was broken but how did the policymakers in Stockholm react and did they discern a connection with Czechoslovakia? Undén was not genuinely surprised as was observed here above and neither did he necessarily believe in a direct connection with the events in Prague.

Also Undén considered that the Soviets had behaved quite moderately which he attributed as the effect of the strong Western reactions on the communist coup in Czechoslovakia. But he also believed that the Soviets were not interested in a Treaty with severe terms that could have divided the Finnish people.<sup>46</sup> Undén was not really worried about the coming treaty

because he knew from the embassies in Helsinki and Moscow that the Soviets in the first place wanted to fill up a gap in their defence system which for the rest was completed.

The Soviet Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Zorin, had, as soon as the proposal of Stalin was proclaimed, asked his Finnish colleague Enckell "to supply Scandinavia with quieting information with regard to the Finnish-Soviet talks" which should be done via ambassador Sohlman in Moscow. The Swedes let know that they would appreciate a moderate Soviet position during the negotiations. At the other side it was realized in Stockholm that the Russian indulgence to a large extent depended on the continuation of their policy of neutrality. That fact was confirmed by Helsinki.<sup>47</sup>

Already on March 2, Undén advised the British ambassador that there was no reason for a change of his foreign policy and he added that the relations with Moscow were "quite normal."<sup>48</sup> Erlander shared Undén's view and called in a memorandum the visit of two leading businessmen who pleaded for close military and economic relations with the USA very unpleasant. War was, according to these businessmen, unavoidable. Like the businessmen the Swedish crown prince did not share the government's point of view with regard to the political situation:

"Equally unpleasant was Undén's and my conversation with the crown prince, who stubbornly clings to his narrow-gauged thoughts. Just now he thinks that a Scandinavian Defence Union would be a guard for peace in the North. He also believes that the developments in Finland are going to have a decisive influence on our policy."<sup>49</sup>

The TFCMA had no influence on the foreign policy of Sweden nor had those rumours about impending Soviet actions against Scandinavia. But things were quite different in Copenhagen and Oslo where much weight made was put on the rumours and the Treaty.

#### **4.6. Rumours.**

"A series of very disquieting rumours go through the capitals (...)"<sup>50</sup> wrote Erlander on March 10, 1948. They should have much influence on the political developments in Scandinavia, especially in Norway. The rumours spread in the days just after the coup in Prague and the announcement of Stalin's letter to Paasikivi, i.e. in those days that the public opinion was frightened and prepared to believe everything, how unlikely it might be.

The Foreign Office in Oslo had received disquieting reports from its embassies in Helsinki, Moscow and Warsaw: Norway could expect a similar proposal for a non-aggression pact from Stalin as Finland had received.<sup>51</sup> The reports were quite vague and inaccurate but they had nevertheless a great impact in Oslo. There were also rumours, on both sides of the Atlantic, about an impending Soviet move against Norway. Also those hearsays were taken seriously in Oslo, which is seen in the light of the actual situation, not so astonishing. The Soviet "threat" was also felt in Denmark and had probably got there some extra weight because of an aggressive campaign in the Soviet military press against Denmark in January and February of that year.<sup>52</sup>

Unrest and uneasiness in Oslo and Copenhagen but not in Stockholm. The Swedes were course aware of the rumours. Undén recorded that ambassador Westring in Warsaw had informed him about Soviet plans against Norway. From Prague he got the "news" about communist actions in Denmark and the Hungarian ambassador in Stockholm, Vilmos Böhm, told Undén that Rakosi, the communist leader in Hungary, after coming home from Moscow had said that

"Finland will be finished soon. Even more important is Scandinavia. But that is a matter of money(!)." <sup>53</sup>

Johan Beck-Friis phoned from Oslo that Lange had asked him to travel to Stockholm that very same evening to discuss the new developments. "It seems disquieting" noted Undén in his diary. He informed Erlander while he asked the Minister of Defence, Voug, to notify General Jung.<sup>54</sup> But Undén did not inform the leaders of the political parties during a conference the next morning. After that meeting Erlander, Voug and Undén discussed what Beck-Friis had reported that morning: that Lange expected an offer from Stalin for a non-aggression pact but that he was not going to accept and that he had contacted the American and English embassies on the matter.<sup>55</sup>

Still on March 4 Lange had told Beck-Friis that Czechoslovakia could not change Norway's policy but only a couple of days later that statement appeared to be more or less out of date: He even asked the British and American ambassadors which help Norway might expect in case of a Soviet attack. Again one week later Lange met Bevin and Marshall in Paris at a conference about the European Recovery Program and there the matter was taken up again (see chapter 5). In a contemplative letter from Beck-Friis to Undén, one year later, the Swedish ambassador ascertained that Lange's "total



turn-over" had occurred about at the time of the incidents in Czechoslovakia. Yet he thought it hard to believe that the events in Prague had come "as a bolt from the blue" because they could have been foreseen. The Norwegians had made the impression as if they were stricken by panic when they asked England and America what kind of assistance they might expect in case of a Soviet attack.

Beck-Friis was convinced that the rumours were used by Lange as a pretext and that he had already made up his mind before: he wanted closer military relations with the West and he was convinced that Denmark wanted the same. Bay, the American ambassador in Oslo, learned from Lange that he believed that Denmark was

"sufficiently aroused by recent Czechoslovak and Finish crises (..) to place Denmark safely on side of the West."<sup>56</sup>

The reactions in Sweden on the rumours were totally different. They were simply not believed<sup>57</sup> and there was accordingly no change in foreign politics. There is little doubt that Bevin used the rumours to convince Truman that he ought to come to the aid of the Europeans and preferably very quickly: "before Norway goes under". The USA, that thus far not had shown much interest in the North of Europe, turned now her attention also to this part of the world.

#### **4.7. "The communist danger"**

Did the events in the spring of 1948 or the escalating Cold War on the whole affect the attitude of the Swedes towards their communist fellow-citizens, as did happen practically everywhere in Europe? Right after the war the communists had been quite popular, also in Sweden, because of the struggle of the Soviets against the Nazis. The communists could not be overlooked and also Swedish politics had to reckon with them.<sup>58</sup> The Swedish social democrats however refused to cooperate with the communists in the elections of 1948.

P.A. Hansson said in 1946 that that decision did not need a public discussion. The public was only to be informed that such a decision had been taken.<sup>59</sup> In January 1948 the communist party had proposed the social democrats to cooperate in the May demonstration and had also pleaded for

electoral-technical cooperation but the SAP party committee declined the offer.<sup>60</sup>

Also the Scandinavian social democratic parties discussed at their meetings what to do with the communists. About half a year after the end of the war (January 1946) the minutes of the Copenhagen conference report that the relations with the communists were, true enough, rather good but that it was nevertheless better to distrust them. One year later, this time in Oslo, there was an extensive discussion about communism. But now it had evolved into a "communist problem" which especially could be found in "the big towns".<sup>61</sup> Party secretary Sven Andersson expressed in a letter to the English Labour Party what the attitude of the Swedish social democrats *vis à vis* the communist party was:

"On account of Your question about our attitude towards the communists I can inform you the following: There is no collaboration at all between the Social Democratic Party and the communists in Sweden. At different opportunities the Communist Party has proposed collaboration in commun and especially some sort of co-operation at the elections, but this proposals have always been refused. An annual proposal for the joint May-Day demonstrations has also every time been rejected. It will be the same this year.

The communist party in Sweden, which (..) has had certain success after the war, now presents itself as a democratic, reformistic, national labour party. This adaption to the politics of the Social Democratic Party, a tactically well-grounded adaption or not is met with suspicion by the Swedish workers and by the public. None believe in this new politics of the Communist Party as an expression for a serious change of its real politics. The devout aspect to Soviet-Russia manifests that the party is not independent in its acting. Accordingly the Social Democratic Labour Party in Sweden refuses every advance from the Communist Party."

The best thing, according to Secretary Andersson, was that all the communists should join the social democrats as individual members because that was "the best way to unity."<sup>62</sup>

Times grew quickly worse for the communists after Czechoslovakia and also their resistance against the Swedish joining of the Marshall Plan, which in

connection with the Truman doctrine, was regarded as an endeavour of the USA to extend their military, political and economic power over Europe was bad for the goodwill that they had enjoyed after the conclusion of peace in 1945.

The leader of the conservative party, Domö, asked Erlander if the communist party leader Hagberg could not be locked out from the regular meetings of party leaders and his fellow party member and editor of the conservative Svenska Dagbladet, Ivar Andersson, made a similar request with regard to pressconferences. Erlander's answer was negative. Svenska Dagbladet refused to be present at press conferences which were also attended by communists.<sup>63</sup> But also Andersson's colleague of the liberal Dagens Nyheter, political-editor-in-chief Kihlberg, was very much opposed to the presence of communists at press conferences. Kihlberg was a real die-hard with regard to communism which is shown clearly in his booklet of 1950 *The Russian agency in Sweden* <Den ryska agenturen i Sverige> which may serve as a good example of cold-war-thinking in Sweden.

Also Folkpartiet (liberal), which was closely connected to Dagens Nyheter, kept its end up and declared already in the summer of 1947 that its attitude against the communists could be taken for granted and pointed out to their unreliability. In drafts of their election campaigns for 1948 it was explicitly formulated that

"Through information an intensive struggle against communism and other subversive doctrines of violence ought to be fought."<sup>64</sup>

Bertil Ohlin wanted to lock out the communists from the various Northern interparliamentary groups meetings but that was opposed by Prime Minister Erlander who argued that the communists had their rights too and that they were quite entitled to join such meetings.<sup>65</sup> Communism was a steady returning item between Ohlin and Erlander whereby the former made use of the common fear for communism to attack the social democrats who were accused by Ohlin accused for being too soft on communism.<sup>66</sup>

Also the British Embassy was seriously worried about the attitude of the Erlander administration vis à vis communism. In a top secret note to the Foreign Office in London it was concluded that Stockholm was certainly aware of "the facts about the danger of Communism" but that actually little was done against it. According to the report the authorities were deterred

"from taking drastic measures by the Swedish abhorrence of the use of secret police against a section of the community".

It was considered undesirable to approach the Swedish government on the matter of communism because it might produce an inverted effect.<sup>67</sup> But what the Swedes neglected the English did for them. Agents in Stockholm kept an eye on communist people, papers and organizations. The results were every month reported to London and the Foreign Office was exactly informed about the conducts of the more important communists: their residence, there journeys, how long they had been away from home and whom they had met. Not only during their travels but also in their domicile.<sup>68</sup>

Also the conservatives were panic-stricken by the "red danger" and produced in 1948 a folder with titles on anti-communist and Soviet propaganda as *"What is happening behind the 'Iron Curtain'?"*, *"Soviet spies"*, *"Russia's real face"* etc. The titles could be ordered from Svenska Dagbladet, which was closely connected to the conservatives. The conservative party did also organise anti-communist meetings and produced a leaflet with anti-communist propaganda which could be obtained "free of charge". There was also a proposition to make a map with places where communists could be found (and how many) because such maps could be very useful, in anti-communistic campaigns.<sup>69</sup>

Yet the Swedes were not so scared for the Reds that they sought their security in a Western Alliance. An important factor for the treatment of the communists in Sweden might have been that the government did not want to jeopardize her fairly good relations with Moscow through openly adopting a harsh attitude against her communist citizens.

## CHAPTER 5. THE SCANDINAVIAN DEFENCE UNION<sup>1</sup>

### 5.1. A thought with a tradition.

Undén's idea of building a Scandinavian Defence Union (SDU) was not a brandnew one but it had one thing in common with the earlier proposals: there was little chance that it ever would become a military reality. The earliest thoughts about a SDU deserve however hardly the name "Scandinavian" and it would be more correct to talk about a Swedish-Finnish defence community.

When the Swedish foreign minister Carl Hedenstierna, unofficially, launched the idea in 1923 he could not have foreseen that his proposal should mean the end of his career in the conservative Trygger administration. The Danish conservative leader Christmas-Möller had no success either, neither in his homeland nor in the neighbour countries, when he put forward his ideas about a military cooperation.

Only the Finns received thoughts about a union with more enthusiasm, afraid as they were for eventual future interventions of the Soviet Union, and so a defence union could mean some extra protection. In the final phase of the Finnish-Soviet Winter War (30-11-1939-13-03-1940) the Finnish government put forward an official request (11-03-1940) to the governments of Sweden and Norway to explore the possibilities of a defence union. Both governments answered politely that they were willing to investigate the possibilities but very soon they let Helsinki know that a union with Finland was out of the question as long as Helsinki was at war with the Soviets. Peace was concluded a few days later but due to the outbreak of war in Scandinavia (april 1940) the matter was not taken up again.

Madame Kollontai, Soviet Ambassador in Stockholm, said in a reaction that an eventual defence union had to be of a purely defensive character and that it, first of all, should enforce the neutrality of the three countries but foreign minister Molotov expressed his disagreement to the Swedish ambassador in Moscow, asserting that such a pact would basically be aimed against the Soviet Union and advised the Swedish representative to abandon the plans.<sup>2</sup>

As long as Europe was involved in the most atrocious war in its history the question of a SDU was of course totally irrelevant but already early in 1945, the war had not even ended by that time, at a meeting of the Northern cooperation committee of the social democratic parties of Denmark, Finland,

Iceland, Norway and Sweden the question of a SDU was put forward again. Close cooperation in military matters was not excluded beforehand but real decision were not taken.<sup>3</sup>

The Danish foreign minister definitively seemed to have made up his mind in september 1945 when he stated that joining a Northern defence union as well as the adherence to an eventual Western Pact was out of the question and that the change of government in november 1947 did not alter that standpoint.<sup>4</sup>

However there were secret talks on military cooperation between Denmark, Norway and Sweden which started in September 1946. The Soviets, who soon appeared to be informed about the talks were suspicious, according to the Finnish historian Nevakivi, because they considered them a first step in a closer connection with the West.<sup>5</sup>

It must be stressed however that these talks were of a preparatory character and dealt mainly with practical questions (types of weapons, calibre etc.) and that they were conducted by the military leaders of the three Scandinavian countries and *not* by the governments. The views of the military leaders in Sweden in the period were always different from those at the political top (see chapter 6.4). The top brass of the Swedish armed forces welcomed close cooperation with Norway. Denmark, on the other hand, was from a military point of view regarded as a millstone round the neck of an effective defence apparatus (see Chapter 6.1 and 7.2).

## 5.2. A short survey of Norwegian and Danish neutrality.

In the turmoil of early 1948 there was one thing that more than anything else disturbed Undén: the increasing interest in Norway for closer collaboration with the West which could, at least in the eyes of the Swedish foreign minister, easily turn into a drifting away from pure neutrality.

Much more than Denmark's foreign policy the Norwegian international relations had been subject to changes and the history of independence was also different. From 1814 to 1905 Norway had formed a Union with Sweden in which the latter had been the determining factor and Norway feared that something similar would happen again in case of a SDU being established. The Swedish preponderance had left traces in the Norwegian national consciousness and should play a (minor) role in the failure of the SDU.

Norway's geographical remoteness had been the main source of its inclination to isolationism. In 1814 Nikolai Wergeland warned in an eloquent speech to the Constitutional Convention even for a continuation of the links with Denmark which he regarded as an unnatural liaison with a neighbour country which could involve the fatherland

"in unnatural wars and entangle us in disputes with powers with which it was neither natural nor necessary for Norway to quarrel."

It was easy enough to hold aloof from the quarreling European powers because Norway was situated in "a hyperborean corner of the globe" and furthermore "protected from the Continent by deep seas and palisades of numberless cliffs (..)."6

A second factor that had given the Norwegians a feeling of safety was the reliance on England. It was assumed that it could never be in the interest of London to admit other big powers a foothold on the Norwegian coast. The English (and French) guarantee for Norway's (and Sweden's) territorial integrity against Russian aggression during the Crimean War (1853-1856) had strengthened the conviction that England was a silent and remote watch-dog of Norwegian isolationism. Also after the dissolution of the union with Sweden, Great Britain's implicit guarantee remained the cornerstone of Norway's policy of neutrality.

The First World War convinced the Norwegians that they could stay out of European wars. The dream was shattered in April 1940 when the Germans invaded the country and already in October 1940 the Government-in-exile in London launched the idea of an "Atlantic policy". In that new strategy the US and Great Britain were considered as the axis of a North Atlantic security system embracing both North West Europe and the US.

After the war Norway returned to her old policy of non-alignment and to a policy of bridgebuilding which main aim was not to become involved in the political conflicts between East and West. Acceptance of the Marshall Aid, for example, was the object of debates because it could be seen as choosing the American side.

Under the influence of events in the first months of 1948 the feeling of insecurity grew and the idea of an "Atlantic Policy" became appealing again. It was the return to those ideas that was the immediate cause of Undén's proposal for a Northern defence community. Also during the period of bridgebuilding there had been cooperation between Oslo and London in the military

field (training and supplies) and in internal discussions the possibility of a Western orientation in case of growing tensions between the Superpowers was not excluded.

A Western guarantee for help, explicit or implicit, was a *conditio sine qua non* for Norway as it in fact had been since the Crimean War. Here lies the principal difference to the Swedish foreign policy and this discrepancy would eventually prove to be unbridgeable.

Was 1949 a turning point in the foreign relations of Norway the Norwegian historian Riste asks in a paper with the same title. His answer is negative; there was no break but continuity because Norway continued in fact its policy which was traditionally based on the (tacit) assumption that the guarantee of the Western big powers for her national security was indispensable.<sup>7</sup>

The attitude of Denmark in the rising cold war did not differ much from that of Sweden and accordingly it did not trouble Undén. Denmark had, in contrast to its Scandinavian neighbours, been involved in a few armed conflicts (1848-1850 and 1864), both times with the German Bund and both times over the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein which both had a mixed population of Germans and Danes. Like the other Scandinavian states Denmark managed to stay out of World War I but the Second World War shattered the Danish neutrality. The Danes did not fight the German troops when they invaded the country in April 1940 and the government did not, like the Norwegian, go into exile. The war brought considerable damage to the country. Denmark, being a part of the European continent and furthermore economically heavily dependent on it, was far more Western oriented than Sweden and Norway and their attitude toward European integration was not so declining as was the case in Oslo and Stockholm. Yet after the war they returned to the old policy of neutralism and showed also in 1948 little enthusiasm to enter a Western military alliance. They preferred a Scandinavian, i.e. the Swedish solution.

### 5.3. The "drifting away" of Norway.

Of course Undén's proposal of May 1948 did not come not as a bolt from the blue. For about four months Undén had been worried about the change in the Norwegian attitude to absolute neutrality and he had noticed the influence of the January and February events on the Norwegian foreign policy.



The first signs of Undén's worrying can be found in his diary on December 14, 1947 when he made the following remark: "Sensational reports from Beck-Friis in Oslo about Norwegian views on the international situation. May be I ought to travel there and talk thoroughly with Lange soon". Professor Skodvin dates the first indications of Lange's "drifting away" on October 28 1947.<sup>8</sup> Lange's reaction on the Bevin speech further convinced Undén that something was "wrong" in the foreign policy of Oslo. True enough, Lange had reacted negatively on the speech of Bevin, negative in the sense that he had not said a whole-hearted "yes" to the Western Union speech but he had also remarked that Norway in the first place belonged to Western Europe, leaving the impression that Norway wanted to keep the possibility open of entering a Western pact at a later stage.

The Swedes had enough reasons to be suspicious of the Norwegian intentions. Beck-Friis reported on February 6 that Sir Laurence Collier, English minister in Oslo, could please himself with the thought that certain members of the Norwegian government became more and more attracted by the idea of an association, in one form or another, with a Western union and that Undén's reaction on the speech of Bevin had been received with regret. Lange had personally told Beck-Friis that taking a stand in the future should become unavoidable. On that occasion he did not mention what standpoint Norway would choose but the hint was enough for the experienced Swedish diplomat.

Beck-Friis was already at that time convinced that leading Norwegian circles intended to join, in some form, the Bevin plan, a view which was confirmed by Trygve Lie, former Norwegian Foreign Minister and General Secretary of the UN, himself being positive regarding a military cooperation with Sweden.<sup>9</sup> A steady flow of reports by Johan Beck-Friis on the Norwegian inclinations to turn to the West reached Undén. The ambassador in Oslo expressed as his personal view that Norway was slowly drifting to the West:

"Sweden has to take into account the possibility, if not to say the probability that Norway, preferably in the company of Sweden, but in case that appears to be impossible, also without Sweden is going to try to get a guarantee from the West in one form or another."<sup>10</sup>

Also Gerhardsen had expressed the necessity of making a choice on a SAMAK conference in February.<sup>11</sup>

Beck-Friis reported what Lange had put forward on a secret meeting of the Storting (April 8). Eleven days later Lange repeated his speech before the Norwegian military, saying that Norway did not want to separate its foreign policy from that of Sweden and Denmark but that the military-political and security problems of the three countries were not identical. The text of his speech was given to the newspapers and in that Beck-Friis perceived a further step on the Norwegian road of adherence to a Western pact:

"I cannot help getting the impression that the Norwegian foreign leadership intends a step by step association of Norway to the Western powers, preferably together with or otherwise without Sweden and Denmark."<sup>12</sup>

There can be no doubt that the Swedish government was directly worried about the direction of Oslo's foreign policy. As late as four weeks before Undén made his SDU proposal he showed little enthusiasm for a SDU - in fact he had, never been eager about it, the proposal was merely a last attempt to prevent Norway from joining the West - and in an address to the Social Democratic Party committee he estimated the chances for a SDU very small and referring to both a Western as well as a purely neutral Scandinavian defence pact he remarked:

"We must remember that the Danish defence is weak, so is the Norwegian, even though it is a little stronger. A defence union would mean, that Sweden would take upon itself to help Denmark as well as Norway. There are neither political nor psychological grounds for that."<sup>13</sup>

Undén contemplated that a SDU "would be worth consideration if the countries were armed about equally well" Another prerequisite was that the countries were willing to bind themselves to a similar foreign policy. Undén felt that a SDU in the present situation would only cause increasing risks for Sweden "corresponding advantages for Sweden's security" could not be expected. Furthermore he doubted if Norway was willing to give up its freedom of action in foreign politics in exchange for help from Sweden.<sup>14</sup>

One month later the situation had become so alarming that Undén considered it his duty to propose a SDU, being the only chance to keep the Western big powers out of Scandinavia because also a West associated Norway could bring the Swedish policy of neutrality in danger.

#### 5.4. May 3, 1948. Sweden proposes a SDU.

On April 22 the Swedish foreign committee (utrikesnämnden) was informed about the military situation and the next day Undén gave an extensive survey of the foreign policy. Afterwards he asked the committee-members if there were any objections against his plan to investigate in how far Norway and Denmark were interested in a neutral Scandinavian Defence Union. There appeared to be none.<sup>15</sup>

The decision to make a proposal had not been easy. About the discussions within the government itself little is still known<sup>16</sup> but Erlander writes in his memoirs that he as late as March 24 still was very skeptic about a SDU but that a feeling of growing uneasiness about war had overwon his objections. Undén, as we saw above, nursed similar feelings.

Swedish politics are like the politics of all nations determined by self-interest. The conviction was (and it still is) that the Swedish interests were best served by staying out of military pacts so that Sweden could not, against her will, be drawn into a war that she did not want. In this conception there is no room for moral reflections because

"no country regards it its duty to interfere in the course of events sacrificing its own safety."<sup>17</sup>

Undén's main preoccupation was to prevent aggression on Swedish territory. The basic thought of Undén's neutrality considerations, also in this period of the cold war was, that Sweden had managed to stay out of two World Wars. Undén admitted more or less that the chances to stay out of a global armed conflict were small but all the time that Sweden could stay aloof was important. If both East and West could be convinced of the Swedish intentions of staying out of conflict, the country could, at least at the beginning, avoid to become a theatre of war.

Arrangements for help in advance (i.e. from the West) were of no use, since help most likely would come too late. If a policy of neutrality were maintained there would be at least a few weeks time to mobilize troops and to negotiate with the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> Undén did not want to expose Sweden to the pressure of the Great Powers, which, he feared might be the result of a pact membership. Undén was not blind to the disadvantages of Swedish neutrality:

"Soviet can attack whenever it wants to without risking a World War. We are written off by the West. The other alternative: ally ourselves with the Western Powers. Disadvantages: we are placed by the Soviets among their enemies. No total security of effective help."

But the advantages were not very attractive either:

"Soviet must say that an attack means world war. Possibilities to get war material from USA. Difficult choice. Incredible responsibility. Both alternatives can lead to our destruction(..) But we cannot wait too long."

He wondered if there was no other way: "Is there may be a third way? A regional pact within the frame-work of the United Nations may be suitable (..)."19

Russia was an important factor in Undén's considerations to relinquish the membership in a Western Pact because it would, and not unreasonably according to Undén, assume that Sweden would admit the West to erect bases on Swedish territory, aimed against the Soviet Union and react accordingly in her policy vis à vis Sweden. It would do anything to prevent such a development. The result:

"Sweden would become the object of power struggle for political influence (..) between Russia and the USA. Our country would become a centre of unrest."20

Undén had no confidence in the Super Powers, neither from the East nor from the West. Both in case of a Western aligned SDU and in case of a direct adherence to the West, foreign influence in Sweden would be a fact. A neutral, not Western linked SDU, was more attractive. On the one side the foreign policy of the three countries would be coordinated and on the other side Norway and Denmark would be assured of Swedish assistance in case of a Soviet attack which might have a deterring effect on Moscow but the biggest advantage was of course that Sweden would be able to continue its traditional foreign policy.<sup>21</sup>

First and foremost it was an possible Norwegian engagement with the West that could endanger Undén's foreign policy and that fact convinced him of the necessity of his proposal.<sup>22</sup>

Minister of Defence Vougt explained the Swedish proposal as follows:

"There are greater prospects to keep the war away from the North, if a defence union is established and the Scandinavian states follow a

common policy on a clear independent course between the Great Powers."

He considered that:

"the interests of the Great Powers could not be of such a decisive strategic importance that Scandinavia would be drawn into a war (..) A unified North is a great and arduous undertaking, if these states have a strong defence."<sup>23</sup>

A week earlier Prime Minister Erlander had expressed as his conviction that

"A connection of the Scandinavian countries to the Atlantic Pact increases the risks of war. We belong then to the most forward outposts. If Norway joins; we also are in a dangerous position. That is why the SDU is our safest option."<sup>24</sup>

Sverker Åström, Secretary at the Foreign Office, emphasized that Sweden's position in case of a Scandinavian splitting up into a Western- and non-Western aligned part would be more exposed in times of peace as well as war. The probable result in peacetime would be military and political pressure and there was also the danger that Moscow should invite Sweden to join a military or political pact. The proposals would of course be rejected but they could result in increased political tensions. It was also possible that Sweden would become subject to pressure "for instance in commercial connection."

In wartime, an isolated Swedish neutrality would be much more difficult to defend than a common Scandinavian neutrality.

A possible effect of a SDU was that the iron-ore mines of Sweden could be defended more effectively if use could be made of Norwegian territory and air bases. Should the Soviets plan an attack on Norway then it was almost unavoidable that they would make use of Swedish territory, thereby automatically drawing Sweden into war. In that respect a SDU did not mean an increased risk of war.

A liaison with Denmark however was another case altogether. If The Russians would break through to the West, on their way to the European continent, they should undoubtedly occupy Denmark. Such a Westward operation would not necessarily imply a contemporary action against Sweden. A Danish joining of the SDU meant an "unnecessarily" increased risk of war with the Soviet Union. Åström pleaded that a limitation of Sweden's military obligations to Denmark "both can and must (..) be brought about" and proposed to limit the Swedish help to Zealand or parts of it.<sup>25</sup> Denmark was

generally regarded as indefensible and therefore as a burden. The invitation to Denmark was made for both political and psychological reasons.<sup>26</sup>

The Swedish proposal did not arise out of concern for Norway's fate, not to speak of the Danish, but purely out of the Swedish national interests: to keep war away from Sweden as far as possible and the prerequisite for that was that the Swedish conception of neutrality included the whole of Scandinavia. The position of Finland, which is often mentioned as a important factor, did not play a role of any importance.<sup>27</sup>

On April 27 Lange learned via Beck-Friis that Undén intended to travel to Oslo to discuss the possibilities of a SDU. The date was set on May 3. However Lange let know that if Sweden should stick unconditionally to its concept of neutrality he would not accept the offered cooperation. The different approaches could already be distinguished before the preliminary talks even had began and in fact they should not alter. (See also chapter 7.5) Lange told Beck-Friis that he had the impression that Undén had two main arguments against a military guarantee from the West: the Soviets should look upon it as a provocation and secondly that a guarantee for help had not much worth. Yet another point of difference was that Lange, as contrary to Undén, expected war soon.<sup>28</sup>

Also Copenhagen was informed about the Swedish plan. Undén should travel personally to Copenhagen on the 9th of May to explain his SDU proposal.

The first discussions with Norway took place at Lange's home and present were, beside the host, defence minister Hauge, Prime Minister Gerhardsen and the chairman of the Norwegian social democratic party in the Storting, Mr. Torp. At first Undén talked to Lange alone and he started their talk with the somewhat sarcastic question if any information of disquieting nature had reached Lange lately. The answer was negative. Lange explained that he preferred a unilateral American declaration that a Russian attack on Norway would be considered a *casus belli* to the USA.

In Undén's opinion such a promise would result in an American demand for bases in Norway which, in its turn, would imply worse relations with Moscow. Scandinavia was not to become part of a Western bloc and should stay out of war in case of a conflict. That was the basis for his SDU concept, but Lange did not agree with this unconditional policy of neutrality. Undén emphasized

that all the Swedish political parties had united round his foreign policy, although the debates in the press might give another impression.

Stockholm was not especially optimistic about the possibilities of neutrality, but none the less the chances of staying out of the next war ought not to be thrown away beforehand. Undén stressed the importance of peace-time relations and the urgency of avoiding frictions with the big powers.

Hauge shared Lange's views but Gerhardsen<sup>29</sup> appeared to be much more on the Undénian line and attached great importance to a similar Norwegian-Swedish foreign policy but he emphasized as well that the word "neutrality" should be avoided because of its bad reputation in Norway. Gerhardsen referred here of course to the Swedish attitude in the last World War.

Undén agreed not to insist on the word "neutrality" or "strict neutrality" but remarked at the same time that he in his turn could not agree to an

"investigation, which was so extensive, that it also included the alternative of a guarantee from the Western Powers and thus alliance policy."

No decisions were taken during this meeting because the entire Norwegian government had to be consulted on this matter but the different views were hardly going to change during the several SDU meetings which were to come in the next 8 months and the positions had in fact not altered when the SDU plan finally and definitively shattered in Oslo on January 29 -30, 1949.<sup>30</sup> Undén's visit to Copenhagen was cancelled. It was decided that he should meet the Danish government members on the party congress of the Swedish Social Democrats in Stockholm on May 18. Also the Norwegians would be there. With the answer on Undén's proposal.

### 5.5. The SDU negotiations. May 1948 - January 1949.<sup>31</sup>

One day before the Scandinavian government leaders were discussing the SDU plan Undén gave his views on the SDU problems during a lunch with his Danish colleague Rasmussen and "(..) did not hide" as Undén wrote in his diary on the 9th of May that "the question of cooperation with Denmark appeared to be more difficult than the corresponding question about Norway."<sup>32</sup>

Rasmussen shared however Undén's views on the necessity of neutrality:

"Concerning preconditions for cooperation, i.e. the ambition to keep out

of the Great Power blocs and the policy of neutrality in case of war he had the same idea as I." (Undén's underlining).<sup>33</sup>

Rasmussen pointed out however that both the Conservatives and the Liberals were inconsistent in their views. Thus when the Scandinavian leaders gathered in the afternoon of May 10 after the party congress, Undén knew the viewpoints of the two other parties. Present from Sweden were Erlander, Undén, Voug (Minister of Defence), Wigforss (Minister of Finance), Möller (Minister of Social Affairs) and Sköld (Minister of Agriculture and long time Minister of Defence); for Denmark Prime Minister Hedtoft, Foreign Minister Rasmussen and Minister of Finance Hansen while Norway was represented by Gerhardsen who found himself in a rather peculiar situation as he saw himself placed before a united Swedish-Danish front that proclaimed an idea that he also preferred but that he could not openly accept because of the controversies in his government about this issue.

It was an unpleasant experience for the Norwegian Prime Minister who had travelled to Stockholm supposing that the negotiations would take place in a confidential atmosphere with his Danish and Swedish colleagues.<sup>34</sup> It was decided that the SDU negotiations would be continued in the future and Gerhardsen drafted the text for the communique. Undén was pleased because

"It covered the Swedish point of view but avoided the word neutrality, which the Norwegians and Danes do not like."<sup>35</sup>

But Oslo was not pleased with the communique that would go to history as the "Stockholm Memo" and according to which the purpose of the SDU would be

"to secure the independence and freedom of the three countries to keep them outside any groupings of other powers and outside a possible war between the Great Powers."<sup>36</sup>

Of course Lange and his supporters could not accept the Stockholm memo. Undén noted in his diary (May 25) that a majority of the Norwegian government could not agree with the text. Gerhardsen had suffered his first defeat. Oslo informed London about the memo of Stockholm and sent a representative to discuss the alternatives. Traditionally Norway expected that the British should rush to the rescue and offer help. Already before, on March 8, Lange had asked for military guarantees from England (and the US).



On May 15 Lange, accompanied by Hauge, had a long conversation with Sir Winston Churchill who said that Norway probably could get American guarantees. It was the conviction of the old English wartime leader that the Swedish hope of maintaining their neutrality in a next war was "purely nonsense." However he did not expect war soon. Churchill has, according to Beck-Friis, been a further stimulus for the Norwegian Western orientation.<sup>37</sup>

In the meantime there was still no other text than the Stockholm memo on which the talks could be continued. For Stockholm it became abundantly clear that the government in Oslo was split in the SDU case and that they stood all the time in very close contact with London on which protection they had relied for one and a half century.

London was very much against a neutral SDU, as proposed by Sweden, because it meant that England would loose her grip on the Norwegian coast which was supposed to be of vital importance to her security. If a SDU would come into being then London would hold Stockholm responsible, so was the opinion of Swedish ambassador Boheman in London. He also reported that he had got the impression that London was convinced to have "Norway in hand" and referred to the possibility that Lange made use of his English connections "to draw Sweden over to his course."<sup>38</sup>

In the beginning of June things seemed hopeless when Lange asserted in a speech in Malmö, South Sweden, that there was no common Northern line with regard to the main themes in foreign policy. Undén was angry that Lange had not contacted him before delivering his speech. Erlander phoned immediately his colleague in Copenhagen who appeared to be "depressed" because of what the Norwegian Foreign Minister had said.

In the meantime Lange seems to have become more at ease with regard to Russian aggressive intentions towards Norway.

Anyway that was the impression of Undén when he met Lange and Rasmussen in Stockholm on June 16. Lange told that he had heard from different sources that Norway had nothing to fear from the Soviet Union. Trygve Lie had on behalf of Oslo made enquiries with Gromyko in March about the policy of Moscow vis à vis Norway and obtained the assurance that the Soviets had no evil intentions as regards Norway. Similar information had also reached Oslo also from other directions and all messages had emphasized that the Soviets

had not taken action against Spitzbergen (Svalbard) which could serve as proof for the peaceful intentions of the Russians. Lange pointed out that fear of a isolated Soviet action against Norway played an important role in the Norwegian public opinion. He appeared now to be willing to limit the investigations to the "neutrality alternative" but did not want to admit that publicly because that could leave the impression that Norway once again had changed its foreign policy.<sup>39</sup>

Denmark was only too glad that the talks could get started. A definite date was not set however. Both Lange and Undén did not appear to be in a great hurry and it was decided that a definite date for the first sessions could be made at the next meeting of foreign ministers in Stockholm. Most important for Undén was that in principle the decision was taken to start the SDU talks according to his line. The final outcome of the negotiations were expected around February 1 1949. It was agreed that until then the three countries would not enter negotiations with other nations on military cooperation. Should however in the meantime, due to unforeseen events, anyone decide to start such talks with a third country the others had to be informed.<sup>40</sup>

In a letter to Undén Lange insisted that the SDU committee, which was to be established to investigate all the ins and outs of a SDU, should be ready with its work before January 1 1949. What was the motives for this request? Beck-Friis gives a possible answer: Hauge had been to England during the turn of the month (July-August) and on that occasion he had learned that the Western powers at the very moment did not want to actualize the question of an eventual Norwegian joining of a Western bloc. Lange had advised Beck-Friis that this question should be suspended until the new elected American president had taken office. That was why he was willing not to negotiate with the West for the durance of the SDU negotiations.<sup>41</sup>

Beck-Friis commented:

"that the Norwegian foreign leadership despite all wishes for the best relations with Sweden is not willing to give up the security, which it seems to consider, a future guarantee from the West can give the country. I have reasons to believe that the willingness of the Norwegian foreign minister to agree to an investigation of the possibilities for a military cooperation is found partly and chiefly in an absolute conviction, if not to say assurance, that the investigation is not going

to have any worth as to practical results, partly in a wish to avoid in this way criticism from that part of his own party that wishes cooperation with Sweden."<sup>42</sup>

Summing up: Beck-Friis thought that Lange had already made up his mind to join a Western Pact, in the meantime however, until January 1 1949, as long as he could not negotiate with the West, he wanted to use the SDU talks to convince his opponents that a Scandinavian pact was not the solution for Norway's safety because the key to security lay in the West.

On September 8-9, the three foreign ministers gathered again in Stockholm. Arms-aid from the USA appeared to be an important subject. Both Lange and Rasmussen thought that the USA would be more inclined to sell war material if a Scandinavian cooperation would take shape. Until then the USA had turned down their requests for weapon deliveries.

But later during the Conference Lange showed himself to be skeptical about the chance in how far inter-Scandinavian cooperation would induce Washington to give military aid. An assurance for Scandinavian cooperation was not enough. He also feared that a SDU would be insufficient to protect Norway's integrity. Undén on his side pointed out that the US should want *quid pro quo* for their guarantee.

The result of the Stockholm meeting was that the Foreign Ministers agreed to authorize discussions on the desirability and extent of possible military collaboration. The bulletin in which the intended SDU discussions were made public did not reveal the supplementary agreement: neither Norway nor Denmark would form any other military pact until the decision had been taken with respect to effecting an understanding regarding the mutual defence of Scandinavia. It was agreed that the investigations about the common defence should be finished by about the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1949 although Lange was of the opinion that it had to be finished as soon as possible, preferably before the new elected American president took office. The Scandinavian countries were around the 1<sup>st</sup> of February expected to give a straight "yes" or "no" to the SDU.<sup>43</sup>

The Ministers of Defence met in Oslo on October 15 and the SDU negotiations were definitively started. The Scandinavian Defence Committee was constituted on October 16. It consisted of twelve members, four from each country. Sweden was represented by Sven and Elon Andersson, members of

the Riksdag, (Sven Andersson was on 28 November replaced by Riksdagmember G.F. Thapper) Governor <landshövding> Carl Hamilton, and General Nils Swedlund.

These had the assistance of a number of military and civilian experts. The final report was presented on January 14 1949. The Committee's task was to investigate the possibilities and conditions of two alternatives: a) a defence union and b) a partial defence cooperation. With reference to alternative a) the defence union, the most important assumptions were that a military attack on one of the three countries would be answered with armed resistance of the others and that none of the three would abandon territory without combat; further the three agreed to stay out of war and not to enter military agreements with third nations during the SDU negotiations. And finally they should carry out as effectively as possible the commitments they had taken according to the UN statutes.

Defence minister Vougst made during the conference in Oslo (October 15) an oral restriction which was (also orally) accepted that

"certain restrictions regarding solidarity remained necessary with regard to special areas outside the homeland territories for example Greenland and Spitzbergen."

Also in the Committee the arms question was a steady returning point of debate. In the final conclusions of the Committee of January 14 1949 the three could not unite on two points: Swedish-Norwegian military assistance to Denmark in case of a Soviet attack on Denmark, the preventive effect of a SDU and the need for help from outside.

The Danes and Norwegians agreed on those points, which is quite remarkable because in the talks on government level it was always Sweden and Denmark who agreed with each other. The conclusions of the Committee were not binding for the governments and it seems that the effect of the Committee's final conclusions on the decisionmaking government leaders was none at all.

Prof. Carlgren concludes that the Committee tried to formulate their final conclusion as "elastic" as possible and that:

"Equally general, careful and vague wordings also could be found in other less conflicting parts of the report. Obviously the three governments could on this basis conclude both that the conditions for a Scandinavian Defence Union existed as well as not existed (...)."

After all, before the Committee was ready with its final report the governments themselves had already started the discussion whether the prerequisites for a SDU could be found or not.<sup>44</sup>

London and Washington did not leave Oslo and Copenhagen in peace during the SDU deliberations. On the 23rd of September, Hickerson, Chief of the European Office of State Department, had informed the Danish Ambassador, Kaufmann, about the Atlantic Pact talks and advised that a Danish and Norwegian adherence, also without the company of Sweden would be warmly welcomed. Also the Norwegian embassy was informed. Hickerson maintained that he had the impression that Denmark and Norway were more interested in joining a Western Pact than Sweden and for that reason Stockholm was not informed.

Tactically Hickerson explained (and it was even emphasized) that he did not expect an answer directly. The only thing he wanted was to give the Danes time to consider a future adherence. Only Washington, London and the government in the Canadian Ottawa knew about this so called "*pré-avis*" (pre advice) The Norwegian and Danish embassies in London received an equal *pré-avis* from the Foreign Office. Both Oslo and Copenhagen had the impression, because of incoming reports from their embassies in Washington and London, that an official invitation to join the Atlantic Pact talks could soon be expected.

Sweden knew immediately what was going on. Hedtoft informed Erlander about the *pré-avis* and also about his own point of view. During his recent visit to Oslo he had "lively and strongly" advised not to "give an advance promise to the USA - England of Norway's adherence to a union of Atlantic countries." It was his reaction on a message of the American and British governments to Oslo and Copenhagen (Stockholm received none), which said that they

"considered the appropriateness that Denmark and Norway and eventually also Sweden should adhere to an Atlantic Agreement."<sup>45</sup>

Lange and Rasmussen advised Undén about the *pré-avis* when they met on the UN Conference in Paris at the beginning of October.

At the conference both Lange and Rasmussen had pointed out to the Foreign Ministers of the US and Great Britain how inconvenient it was to make an application to join an Atlantic Pact at a time when the SDU investigations

were still in full swing. The pré-avis also interfered with the Stockholm agreement of September that the planned SDU talks should be carried out undisturbed.

Bevin and Marshall denied during Lange's first visit to know something about the pré-avis. If that was true the explanation could be that the question was taken up by the State Department and the Foreign Office but that it was not taken up by the political heads of the departments.

Hickerson had met Kaufmann about two weeks before Lange met Marshall in Paris and had asked him to keep the pré-avis secret. The Dane had done so but only as long as he stayed with Hickerson in the same room. As soon as the meeting was over he went straight to Erik Boheman, the newly appointed Swedish ambassador in Washington, and informed him about the latest developments. Boheman was also allowed to make copies of the report Kaufmann had made of his meeting with Hickerson. Also the English equivalent "Oral Message. Top secret" found quickly its way to the pertinent desk at the Foreign Office in Stockholm. It stated among other things that

"to be fully effective the pact must provide not only for the security of the countries participating in these talks but also for that of other countries, including Norway and Denmark (...)."46

Bevin and Marshall agreed afterwards that also Stockholm was to be informed about the pre-avis but that was not necessary anymore because Stockholm was already completely informed. Undén also met Marshall in Paris but the pré-avis has apparently not been discussed.

On the whole the meeting between the Swede and the American had not the character of an exchange of thoughts but resembled more "two monologues".47 One delivered by Undén, the other by Marshall. The American complained about the Russian lack of "decency" which was, according to Marshall, the trade mark of Russian politics. Over and over again Marshall repeated how much he abhorred the police-state and how much he feared the spreading of such states. This monologue was clearly meant to frighten Undén but it was, of course, wasted on Undén who knew exactly what he wanted. Undén was not impressed, rather bored:

"All the time he talked about his foreign policy and one did not get

the impression that it was the president who made the general outlines."

Undén in his turn repeated the principles of the Swedish foreign policy and said once more that Sweden did not want to be a puppet in the hands of the big powers.<sup>48</sup> Undén did not meet Bevin in Paris and the Swedish points of view concerning the SDU and Atlantic Pact were explained to the British foreign minister by the newly appointed ambassador in London, Häggblöf. It appeared that Bevin did not want to admit the *pré-avis*; it had only been a "suggestion" and he had "turned it down" immediately.<sup>49</sup>

In Paris Undén made use of the opportunity to explain his politics to his French colleague Schuman, who, according to Undén, clearly understood the argumentation for Swedish neutrality. When Lange met Undén on October 20, he was informed about the latter's meeting with Marshall and Schuman. Lange noted:

"I almost got the impression that Undén apprehended this talk (with Marshall), as well as his talks with Schuman as if they were more or less content with the Swedish neutrality's point of view."

Lange had quite another experience because of what he had learned from the Americans about the talk between Marshall and Undén and because of "what Schuman told me about his conversation with Undén." It was a good example "how different a conversation could be experienced by the two who took part in it."<sup>50</sup>

There would be no more English or American pre-advice but the two existing had clearly impressed Lange which is indicated by the fact that he wanted the Scandinavian Defence Committee to do its work as fast as possible. At the same time he had advised Beck-Friis that he never would accept a Northern cooperation. He thought however, and that might have been another reason for Lange to agree with the investigations on Swedish terms, that the results of that investigation should make it clear to the Swedes that a certain form of cooperation with the West was unavoidable, not only from a military point of view but even because of the industry which for a great part was dependent of the import of raw materials.<sup>51</sup> About one week later Häggblöf reported from London that there were many indications

"that several Norwegians in high official positions already were prepared for a quick termination of the Scandinavian deliberations and thereupon following association with the West."<sup>52</sup>

The Danish point of view was completely different. When Hedtoft visited Undén in the fall of October he thought it not likely that Washington would give a guarantee without demanding compensation. On the other hand he considered it out of the question that Denmark could join a defence cooperation with Washington that would give the USA rights to establish bases in his country. He concluded that the Americans had to be satisfied with a neutral Scandinavian bloc. Denmark and Sweden should try to get Norway on that line. It would be the task of the three Scandinavian ambassadors in Washington to convince the Americans of the rightness of a neutral Scandinavia.

When the three Scandinavian Foreign Ministers met in Paris at the end of November Undén made clear to Lange that he had not come to any other thoughts and that he was still convinced to be on the right way.<sup>53</sup> The Soviet Union and the arms question were discussed.<sup>54</sup> Undén was of the opinion that arms were used as a means of pressure and considered it unsatisfactory that the Swedish foreign policy could be dictated by the USA "by laying down conditions for armsdeliveries."

Lange was however worried and impressed by the words of Marshall who had told him that according to the Vandenberg resolution, which sanctioned American participation in a regional security pact, deliveries of arms could not be made to neutrals. Undén believed that it was in the interest of the West that the Northern countries had a good defence so that they could take care of themselves in case of an attack and that the West therefore would deliver arms, if only to defend its own interests.

"We might say the Americans that, if we could not buy from them, we would turn us to the East." whereupon Lange answered that Norway would never accept such a thing.<sup>55</sup>

### **Uddevalla.**

On December 18 and 19 the three Prime Ministers met on the initiative of Denmark in Uddevalla and continued the talks in Gothenburg the following day where they agreed to speed up the SDU discussions. It was Hans Hedtoft who had urged for the speeding up in order to be able to present a Scandinavian defence plan before the Western powers were ready with their own



pact negotiations. Hedtoft appeared to be very upset that the Swedish members of the Scandinavian Defence Committee had said that it would be desirable to keep Denmark out of a defence union. "I had to spend almost half an hour in explaining what the military fools had meant" recorded Erlander in his memorandum.

Erlander reported the course of the meeting to his Foreign Minister. Gerhardsen had been careful, so we learn from Undén's diary, and had been incessantly concerned to find a new course. "He had adopted my [Undén's] way of thinking by reflecting on the possibilities of a guarantee from both sides". But that was not what Undén had said. "I remarked that I had talked about the acknowledgement from both sides, not about guarantee." Gerhardsen had also reflected about the possibility of ordering war material in Sweden on credit via the Marshall Aid.<sup>56</sup> It was also agreed that the three Foreign Ministers should meet soon to talk about the establishment of a SDU. In the Swedish documents I consulted there is no ground for Lange's statement in front of the American ambassador in Oslo, Bay, that during the meeting of Prime Ministers on 18 and 19 December, there had been signs of a "certain change in the Swedish attitude towards the safety problem."<sup>57</sup> The cause of this confusion might have been due to the difference between "acknowledgement" and "guarantees", (see here above).

Before the meeting of the Foreign Ministers, upon which the Premiers in Uddevalla had agreed, could take place the situation reached an acute stage because of an American initiative. On Christmas eve Hickerson called the Norwegian ambassador in Washington, Wilhelm Morgenstierne, to the State Department to inform him that Norway and Denmark within one or two weeks could expect an invitation to join the Atlantic Pact negotiations.

One week before Hickerson had advised Kaufmann that he quite well understood that the three countries first wanted to bring their SDU talks to an end. But he had also expressed his doubts if an invitation to Norway and Denmark to join the Atlantic Pact could wait that long. Apparently, State Department wanted to speed up the Norwegian Danish decision which could, as Robin Hankey told Hägglöf, be attributed to:

"American military circles who wished to include Norway in the Atlantic Group, before consideration with Truman's expensive social program eventually would cause the Congress to haggle over the price of grants for armament of the Atlantic States"

Häggblöf reported also that the French and British, in vain, had tried to persuade the Americans to wait with their application until the SDU talks were finished.<sup>58</sup>

The news of this approach to Norway was a very unpleasant message for Undén who through Beck-Friis was aware of the Norwegian inclination to choose for the West and Hickerson's démarche could be an extra stimulus for the Norwegians. It had earlier been reported that Lange had accepted the SDU talks because he was sure that they would lead nowhere. The advantage for him was that Norway could show its good intentions and at the end of the talks more or less prove that only an adherence to the West could solve their safety problems.

In the beginning of December, after a talk with Lange, Beck-Friis reported that he was now more than ever convinced that Lange wanted an adherence to the Atlantic Pact, that there were no signs of active opposition within the government and that only a minority in Lange's social democratic party seemed to be against it.<sup>59</sup>

Hickerson's request was not wasted on Norway. Right after Christmas, on the 27th of December, the Norwegian ambassador in Stockholm, Bergersen, came to see Undén with the request that a Scandinavian Prime- and Foreign Ministers Conference could be arranged on New Years day. "The reason for this hurry", noted Undén in his diary, "he would get to morrow through a special courier from Oslo." Undén discussed the proposal at great length with Erlander. They agreed that there had to be a certain connection to Uddevalla but could not figure out what it was. Finally they agreed, in principle, on a meeting but not before January 5 or 6.<sup>60</sup>

### **Karlstad.<sup>61</sup>**

The Karlstad meeting on January 5 and 6 made on the outside world the impression that new hopes for the establishment of a SDU had arisen but it is to go much too far to call this meeting, as many did, a conference of hope. What was it that gave so many the feeling that a SDU could be realized? In fact nothing at all. The hope was illusory.

On the evening before Karlstad (Jan. 4 1949) Erlander wrote in his diary that also the most optimistic critics had to admit that Lange, through his New Year speech, had succeeded in his efforts to shatter the SDU. In fact Karlstad was not much more than a postponement of the admittance that

there would not be a military Northern pact although the official decision was taken that the talks should go on.

It was also declared that an agreement on a SDU was still possible. They agreed to make inquiries in London and Washington in how far the Anglo-Americans were interested in the founding of a neutral SDU and if they were willing to provide such a pact with military material.

But the unanimity was only formal. Sweden insisted, as it had done all the time, that direct ties with the West could not be accepted although an exception was made now for the delivery of arms provided they were not given free. The furthest going concession of Stockholm was that the Union could enter in force directly while until then the prerequisite had been that Norway and Denmark should raise first their own defence standard to a specified level.

Norway still preferred some form of association with the West but was now willing to leave the door less wide open than it actually preferred. Denmark felt most for the Swedish option but would probably have accepted any joint Norwegian-Swedish settlement.

If it is true that Norway (i.e. Lange and Hauge) in their heart of hearts wanted an adherence to the West or at least a Western linked SDU it was all part of the game they had been playing from the onset. That game was that Lange cs tried to convince their opponents<sup>62</sup> that everything possible was being done to found a SDU but that it finally failed because of the unwillingness of the USA to accept a neutral SDU and without American support the Norwegian safety could not be assured.

Norway was convinced that the USA, the main pillar of the Western Pact, never would agree with a neutral Scandinavian military pact and seen in that light the "concession" of Norway was no concession at all.<sup>63</sup> Also Undén gave thought to the possibility that the Norwegians relied on the assumption that a neutral SDU under all circumstances would shatter on the US attitude in the arms question which appeared to be the main problem in the SDU negotiations (see also 6.2).<sup>64</sup>

Erlander remained pessimistic about the chance "to save the North from the grip of the Big Powers".<sup>65</sup>

Both the US and England reacted as could be expected and rejected the Karlstad formula.<sup>66</sup> Ambassador Matthews reacted strongly on the Karlstad meeting and reported to the Secretary of State that:

"The Karlstad formula is in my view completely contrary to the whole conception of the Vandenberg resolution; its avoidance of any provision for mutual aid either to the US or to other West European countries outside Scandinavia is against both the spirit and the letter of that basic document. The essence (..) of the Danish arguments for US blessing on Karlstad formula seems to be that (1) we are relieved of the burden of defending Norway and particularly Denmark (2) we gain Swedish agreement to go to war in defence of Denmark and/or Norway (3) we lose nothing essential re Greenland and Faroes. As to (1) I assume that decision to invite Norway and Denmark to join Atlantic Pact was based on our overall conclusion that advantage would accrue to our national security from their membership. I do not see how their failure to adhere would lessen their importance to us strategically, nor lessen our real interest in defending them if they are attacked. On the other hand their non-adherence to the Atlantic Pact plus their membership in a rigidly neutral Nordic bloc (Sweden will accept no Scandinavian alliance at this time which would permit anything but absolute neutrality by any of its members) would prevent us from the vitally important prior planning, coordination and other advance preparations for their defence which are so essential in modern warfare if such defence is to be in any way effective. Of possibly greater importance the Karlstad formula completely ignores the whole conception of the Atlantic Pact as a preventive or deterrent to war by serving notice on the Soviet Union that an attack on any pact member is an attack on all and is an attack on an Atlantic group pledged and ready to act in concert. (..). I feel strongly that acceptance of the Karlstad formula by us would be generally interpreted in Sweden, in Moscow, and elsewhere as a diplomatic setback for us of the first order and that it might well have serious consequences for the whole Atlantic project and for our success in the vital task of coordinating the defence strength of all western countries now living in fear of Soviet aggression."<sup>67</sup>

On the 17th of January Matthews visited the Foreign Office in Stockholm with the message that:

"The United States favours a Scandinavian defence pact provided its members are not impeded thereby from entering

a larger regional pact - the North Atlantic Pact. The Scandinavian group alone would clearly not have enough strength to protect its members from aggression. (..) Limitations of American supply would in the foreseeable future preclude furnishing any weapons or war materials to countries not so qualified for assistance."

And he added:

"The American government hopes that the Scandinavian governments entertain no illusions with respect to the foregoing."

Matthews explained that the word "assistance" also included financial help and even export licenses. It remains a question if his remarks on financial matters and export was not a part of Matthews personal warfare against neutrality (see 6.2 ) Matthews did not leave an official note but read his message in front of cabinet secretary Hans Beck-Friis.<sup>68</sup>

Häggblöf reported from London that the English attitude vis à vis a neutral Scandinavian bloc was very much like the American one. The West had such a vital interest in the Norwegian coast and the entrance to the Baltic that they dared not leave these territories to a rather fragile Northern collaboration but also for psychological reasons it was considered desirable that at least two of the Scandinavian countries were members of the Atlantic Pact.<sup>69</sup>

Lange could be satisfied, if that were the reactions it had been expecting and had hoped for. For Sweden the last chance to found a neutral SDU, if there ever had been a chance at all, was gone.

### Copenhagen and Oslo.<sup>70</sup>

As was agreed in Karlstad that the Scandinavian Prime- Defence- and Foreign ministers were to meet in Copenhagen. There were also parliamentary representatives of the three countries at the 3 day conference. From the very beginning there was no hope for Sweden. The idea of a neutral SDU was skillfully slaughtered by Lange when he, on the first day, declared that the best solution was a neutral SDU of which all the three countries were individual Atlantic Pact members. Because he realized that such was unacceptable for Sweden he had worked out a compromise: Norway could accept a defence union which formally had no ties with the Atlantic Pact but which in practice was part of the Pact, which in its turn would guarantee arms aid and assistance in case of a Soviet attack and there would also be contacts

between the military staffs of the SDU and the West.<sup>71</sup> Lange's "compromise" was of course completely unacceptable for Sweden because it would mean a actual connection with the West. The hope, how even little, for positive results in the SDU negotiations were definitively gone in Copenhagen. After the speech of Lange, Erlander said that "it was finished". The only reason that Sweden joined the final conference in Oslo (Jan. 29-30) was to give the SDU "a decent funeral."<sup>72</sup>

Immediately after the Oslo break-down he used a similar expression although the funeral apparently was not a very sad one because Erlander refers to a "fantastic feast at Åkerhus (..) Think what a place for a feast and a funeral!"<sup>73</sup>

Also Undén considered that the dinner at the medieval Åkerhus

"despite of the failure of the negotiations was a brilliant feast. The speech of Gerhardsen and Erlander and much singing saved the night."<sup>74</sup>

Despite everything the Danes wanted to keep the door open and refused to give up all hopes for a Scandinavian cooperation. They argued that the Americans could change their minds and might finally agree that a neutral SDU was the best solution for everybody. Norway and Sweden refused to accept that.

The Danes wanted in the Oslo communique also a reference to a continuation of the talks which was also rejected by the others: "Should contrary to expectations a change set in, the problem could be taken up again."<sup>75</sup>

For Sweden the SDU was finished, dead and buried. But Norway that never had been enthusiastic about a non-aligned SDU, contrary to Denmark, kept on playing the game that she preferred a SDU, even after the failure of Oslo. In February Lange travelled personally to Washington to propagandize a neutral SDU (see Chapter 7.1). Undén, although he never had cherished much hope that a neutral SDU would be realized, was after the definite failure depressed and thought about resigning which was opposed by Erlander because Undén represented in a very high degree the Swedish foreign policy . He was convinced and noted in his diary: "My departure could be interpreted as a change in the governments policy etc."<sup>76</sup> That was the last what Undén wanted.

## CHAPTER 6. THE SCANDINAVIAN DEFENCE UNION. SOME FACTORS AND VIEWS.

### 6.1 The strategic importance of Scandinavia.

The upcoming Cold War had manoeuvred Scandinavia into the unenviable position of serving as a buffer between the power blocs of East and West. All three countries offered some attractive strategic prizes for eventual future aggressors. The industry of Sweden, which had not suffered from the Second World War, was varied and well developed. The country offered excellent communication and transportation facilities and possessed many forests and iron-ore mines.

Norway was from an industrial point of view rather under-developed. It's geographical position however was, as Great Britain had long been aware of, of great strategic value. The newly risen interest in Arctic air routes, ("polar strategy") being the shortest way from the USA to the industrial heart of Russia, made Norway, which owned the isles of Jan Mayen and Spitzbergen, where air bases could be established an attractive partner for Washington and the Norwegian coast was of utmost importance for the control of the Atlantic, particularly the sea routes to and from Murmansk in the Soviet Union.

Also Denmark was valuable because of its strategic location at the entrance to the Baltic but most important was the fact that it owned Greenland. "Topographically", reported an Intelligence Review of the US War Department, "Scandinavia, excepting Denmark, present a few easy routes of entry for the overland or seaborne invader."<sup>1</sup> Airborne invasions however were not likely to offer problems. Denmark, low and flat, presented only a few natural barriers but the coasts of Norway and Sweden are rocky and precipitous, moreover they have a skerry-guard of offshore islands. The Intelligence Report mentioned only a few favourable landing beaches.

In Sweden around Gävle and on the Skåne Peninsula; in Norway suitable beaches could be found south of Stavanger and in the Oslo Fjord. The interior defence of Norway and Sweden is favoured by dense forests and vast mountain and lake areas. Both countries were quite vulnerable to air attacks which could be launched from various directions.

Already in May 1946 the US War Department concluded that for a successful defence "Sweden must have the support of a strong ally (...)"<sup>2</sup> As

time went by that feeling should grow only stronger but Stockholm did not happen to be in search of such an ally. Sweden held a vital position on the north western flank of the Soviet Union and had of course a central strategic position with regard both to the Danish Straits and the Baltic Sea.

It would have been of virtual importance for the West to have advanced air bases in Sweden (and Scandinavia on the whole) because it would reduce the distance by half for their missiles and planes and also the reliability of their early warning systems would substantially increase. A series of radar installations in northern and eastern Sweden were considered essential for giving the earliest possible warning of air attacks on targets in Great Britain, the USA and Canada.<sup>3</sup>

An additional factor was that naval and air operations in the Baltic could be covered much better from bases in Sweden. Yet there are also a lot of official documents that allege that Sweden was of hardly any strategic importance. The aim of those statements was probably to scare Sweden and give it a feeling of isolation, of standing alone in a war with the Soviets.

There was also a preventive advantage for the West with regard to Scandinavia: denying the Soviets access to the Scandinavian realm in case of war. Neutral areas were considered zones of uncertainty, a hole in the defence barrier, and could, in the opinion of the Western policymakers, be regarded by Moscow as an invitation to extend their influence.<sup>4</sup>

Another reason for the American desire to attach Sweden to a Western Pact was that they, for psychological and moral reasons, wanted as many members as possible: The West should stand firm, shoulder to shoulder, in the struggle against communism. What was needed was a united front of the West European democracies. But there might have been another, additional, reason for the American anxiousness to associate Sweden to a Pact: Sweden's rich supplies of uranium. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) had asked the State Department to start negotiations with Sweden about this raw material for Atom bombs.<sup>5</sup> Denial of Soviet admittance to the ore might have been one of the incentives of the AEC.

There is no doubt that Scandinavia was of strategic importance to the West. Yet the approach of the UK and the US, the main founders of the Western alliance to be, to Scandinavia was not similar because of different



options and historical backgrounds. Great Britain had been interested in Scandinavia for a long time, the USA up to about 1948 hardly at all.

The views within the American administration with regard to Scandinavia were also not at all homogeneous and there appeared sometimes to be a substantial lack of coordination, not only between London and Washington (see 6.3) but also within the American government.

I have already discussed the traditional English interests in Scandinavia, especially Norway. Great Britain was more interested in the defence of the North Sea, the Baltic and the North Atlantic than the Americans and accordingly more occupied with Norway and its long coast line, which was of vital importance for the defence of the British isles. The British ambition was therefore to keep the Soviets as far as possible from that coast. Sweden was said to be of less importance. Already in June 1946, Hankey in the Foreign Office wrote to the British Embassy in Stockholm:

"We shall take a much closer interest in Norway and Denmark than in Sweden because they are allies, are closer to us and of somewhat greater direct strategic importance."

However, that view should alter with the lapse of time. But the Swedish attitude was so very unforthcoming that the English considered it not opportune to invite Stockholm into the Atlantic Pact:

"Denmark and Norway are, however, rather a strategic liability to us without the Swedes and it would be in every way better if the Swedes could somehow be got to assist, though we can write off any possibility of their joining the Atlantic Pact themselves."<sup>6</sup>

Contrary to the United States the British were very well aware of the Swedish points of view with regard to a Western alliance and considered the chance that Sweden could be persuaded to join such an alliance, one way or another, as hypothetical.

A Top Secret document<sup>7</sup> from the Ministry of Defence to the Joint Services Missions summarizes the (military) view of the British on the strategic role of Scandinavia as follows:

- to deny its territory to the enemy
- to grant to the allies the use of Greenland and the right of entry to the Faroes should this be necessary.

The English military preferred a Western aligned SDU but realized at the same time that

"political considerations might outweigh the military considerations, which are not very strong either way."

Direct military assistance in war was considered "unjustifiable". If Norway and Denmark joined the North Atlantic Pact the strategic requirements of the Pact with regard to Greenland and the Faroes would be met and the likelihood that Iceland would join considerably increase but the greatest disadvantage was that the Atlantic Pact

"should be under great pressure to give Norway and Denmark appreciable military equipment which could only be at the expense of Western Union."

Furthermore, assistance was considered useless

"as without Sweden, the resistance of these two countries is bound to be ineffective, however much equipment they have been given."

In an submitted document ( a telegram of the Foreign Office)

it is made clear that "Mr. Bevin is also strongly of the opinion that the issue is primarily political and not military"

The main objective for the British was to maintain the *status quo*, i.e. the coast of Norway free from the influence of the Russians. It was feared that the Norwegians should not be able to withstand the Soviets in case of an attack but if it was allied to Great Britain the purpose, preventing Russia access to the coast of Norway, could be reached much easier.

The Norwegian membership had another big advantage as well: (for the USA the overseas Norwegian possessions might have been decisive) England would get admittance to Iceland and the Faroer, which both were of importance because of their strategic position in the Atlantic and therefore indispensable for the defence of the British isles. Access to these islands would have been endangered if the Norwegians should decide not to join the league to come.

Of course it was not Norway but Denmark which could decide upon the use of the Faroer and Greenland, (Iceland was independent since 1944) but it was expected to follow the course of the old Danish motherland). It was known that Denmark, for the sake of its national security, had little choice but following Norway as Sweden had no intention to ally itself with Denmark alone.

Sweden was a serious problem for the British and Americans because it advocated a neutral SDU. To the UK it meant a strong reduction of her traditional influence in Norway. In case of a neutral SDU the foreign policy of Norway would be closely tied to the policy of Stockholm which of course could not accept the British influence. Sweden was dangerous for British politics because there was a substantial chance that they could turn Norway to their option of a neutral SDU, more or less automatically followed by Denmark. Hankey summarized for the Swedish ambassador why a neutral bloc was not in the interest of Great Britain:

- the Soviets would not be impressed by a neutral Scandinavia with a population of 16 million people and a rather small production capacity
- the North would not be able to resist an attack on its territory
- the Vandenberg Resolution prohibited the deliverance of the arms
- the Second World War, still fresh in mind, had proved the importance of the Scandinavian coast and its hinterland.
- what should a SDU do in time of war? Should they hunt Soviet submarines and shoot down British planes, returning from a mission in the Soviet Union?<sup>8</sup> Moreover it was considered absolutely out of the question that the Russians would leave

"the entrances to the Baltic in neutral hands in the event of war. They would want to control the entrances themselves in order to assure ingress and egress for their submarines, and deny the same to the Western Powers."<sup>9</sup>

The Foreign Office feared that Sweden intended to press his neighbours to adopt a neutral course.<sup>10</sup>

Ingenious proposals were worked out to assure Denmark's and Norway's membership in the Atlantic Pact while at the same time being members of a SDU. The plan, mostly referred to as the *Hankey* plan and which was worked out in various options, was discussed with Oslo and Copenhagen. In the archives of the Swedish Foreign Office that I researched I did not find any indication that the plan was ever discussed in Stockholm.

The plan was conceived in the English Foreign Office and confidentially submitted to the Americans for their comments. It aimed to secure the adherence of Norway and Denmark to the Atlantic Pact while at the same time permitting a Scandinavian mutual aid pact (including Sweden). Sweden

only tied to the SDU could remain non belligerent in any war in which the other two, because of their Atlantic Pact membership, might become involved, except if their metropolitan areas were attacked. Only then should Sweden enter the war.

Denmark and Norway in their turn would assist Sweden in the event of an attack on its territory in accordance with the Nordic agreement of mutual aid. The Atlantic Pact would not automatically come to the rescue: Sweden would be entitled "to immediate consultation (Hankey's underlining) with the Western Powers."<sup>11</sup> It is not clear precisely when this plan was conceived, probably October 1948.<sup>12</sup> Still, on January 17th there seems to have been some hope (or perhaps wishful thinking) that the above mentioned plan could be carried out. It was realized that it would be difficult but not wholly impossible "provided that we are fairly tough as regards the supply of arms."

It was known that the Swedish military favoured an alliance with the West. The solution as proposed in the Hankey plan

"would give everybody the best of both worlds and above all would not leave Sweden herself altogether in isolation though she would not, strictly speaking, have departed from a neutral position."<sup>13</sup>

Lange rejected the plan, after discussions with Gerhardsen and Hauge because it would have placed Sweden in a more favourable position with regard to commitments than the other two countries.<sup>14</sup> Hankey has played with the thought of another possibility "although it is very much less good." Oslo and Copenhagen would join a Scandinavian Pact but not a Western Pact. In this option the Danes would grant bases to Great Britain and the USA in the Faroes and Greenland (neither of both would be covered by the SDU), Norway would defend her own coastline against enemy vessels ("which was such a menace at the beginning of the last war") and both governments (i.e. in Oslo and Copenhagen) would make provisional plans with the Anglo American Staffs "so that they could receive assistance if ever it was asked for."

The West would on their turn supply Scandinavia with arms and military advice. The advantage of this construction was that it would bring the most needed defence facilities, the disadvantage was that it would leave both countries under Swedish leadership with the danger that they at some time in the future would turned to isolationism "and perhaps even into appeasement of Russia." It was feared that in that case Iceland would follow the examples of Denmark and Norway

"so that the USA would not get strategic facilities which they regard as essential for the protection of the North Atlantic in time of war."<sup>15</sup>

It is not known yet if the Hankey plan was officially accepted by the governments of Great Britain and the USA or if it never was anything more than a strategy upon which (prominent) policymakers could philosophize.

The Americans also were in favour of a Scandinavian adherence to the Atlantic Pact, if not for exactly the same reasons as the British. Furthermore there was within the American administration, due to the lack of coordination not one strategy but several (see 6.3). Still generally speaking the chance that Sweden would join an Atlantic system was regarded as small. The only factor that might bring Sweden in was the realization that it had become isolated from its neighbours. Also in the USA there were various Hankey-like scenarios put forward but it was also alleged that for *strategic reasons* it was of relatively little importance "whether or not Sweden would come into the Pact."<sup>16</sup> By that of course nothing is said about the political and psychological importance of a Swedish membership.

Soviet access to Sweden had to be denied but Sweden had a fairly strong defence and could fight the Soviets for some time. The greatest advantage of Sweden's strategic position was her control over the Baltic but the exit and entrance could equally perfect be controlled from Danish territory. Even more important than Denmark proper was Greenland. Just as the Norwegian overseas territories (especially Spitzbergen) were more important to Washington than Norway.<sup>17</sup>

The polar strategy was gaining importance and in that scenario Greenland was absolutely essential. The strategy was build on the development of bases in Canada, Alaska and the islands in the North Atlantic. The distance to Russia was considerably shortened if the route via the North Pole was used. Greenland and Iceland were considered essential for communications ("stepping stones")<sup>18</sup> because of the range of the long distance bombers. The North Atlantic sea- as well as air routes could be controlled from those islands. With regard to Spitzbergen the main aim of US politics was to prevent Russian military bases and installations on this overseas part of Norway.

The Spitzbergen Archipelago (including Bear Island) was of greater importance to Moscow than it was to Washington because it could provide the

Soviets with advanced naval and air bases. Additionally it had a dominating position with regard to the sea straits to Russian harbours in the Barents Sea. That was why the island should be denied to the Soviets for military purposes.<sup>19</sup>

Many sources confirm that the US interest was more focused on Greenland than on Norway and Denmark. Greenland belonged, together with the Azores and Iceland, to the most important US bases in the world, all three being indispensable for communications between Europe and the USA. Since the Second World War the Americans had maintained air force bases on Greenland and they had no intentions whatsoever to abandon those bases. In the Defence Agreement of April 9 1941 it was agreed that those bases would be maintained

"until it is agreed that the present dangers to the peace and security of the American Continent have passed."<sup>20</sup>

Those dangers had clearly not passed in the eyes of the Americans. On the contrary: it had

"become apparent that the strategic need for defences in Greenland still exists and in view of the developments in modern warfare is likely to increase."

The USA refused to leave Greenland and even tried to purchase it which was refused by the Danes, as being politically impossible. Also Undén was of the opinion that Greenland "should be sold to the USA." He made that remark as a "private person", not as the Swedish Foreign Minister in a conversation with the Danish ambassador Svenningsen.<sup>21</sup> Undén probably knew what it was all about and the sale might have saved him a lot of trouble. The Danish government was in a difficult situation vis à vis Greenland according to the Swedish ambassador in Copenhagen, Dardel, as the result of an incident regarding the isle of Bornholm. When the Russian troops left the island in April 1946, after having liberated it from the Germans, Copenhagen had promised Moscow that Denmark would not allow foreign troops to be stationed on Danish territory again.<sup>22</sup>

Sweden lost the tug-of-war with Great Britain and America about Norway when Oslo decided to join the Atlantic Pact and Denmark followed suit. The United Kingdom and the USA had both their own specific reasons for wanting

Norway and Denmark to join the Atlantic Treaty although there were some parallel interests as well: Boheman in Washington and Hägglöf in London reported several times that Swedish membership of the Atlantic pact was desired in the first place for moral, ideological and psychological reasons, rather than for strategic purposes. The main fear in both capitals, according to those Swedish top diplomats, was that Sweden would draw its two neighbours into a Scandinavian isolation which would make it much harder for London and Washington to settle their problems respectively with regard to the Norwegian coast and the bases on Greenland and Iceland.<sup>23</sup>

The Brussels Pact countries did not seem over enthusiastic to welcome the Northern countries into the Pact because of the weapon deliveries. It was feared that a Scandinavian association would be at their expense: The same amount of weapons would have to be divided among more countries.<sup>24</sup> This view was however not constant and seems to have been liable to the level of crisis feelings. At least one time Undén seems to have been skeptical about the importance of Scandinavia to the Big Powers. In a memorandum<sup>25</sup> in which he noted his impressions of his visit to Copenhagen in the autumn of 1948, Undén remarks somewhat sourly that

"Scandinavia is obviously strategically valuable but only if it is placed for nothing and without combat at the disposal of one of the contesting parties." [?]

Scandinavia could not be used as a concentration area in a war between East and West [?] and could not be used for naval warfare but was on the other hand suitable for air-borne troops "but only in summer". And even on this usefulness in summer he had his doubts. An attack against Sweden would go via Finland and partly over the Baltic but according to Undén the Russians were not yet prepared for that. The Norwegian argument against a SDU without ties with the West had always been that Scandinavia could not run the risk of having no friends in the West but

"in Sweden we do believe however that we can assume that it for the English and Americans always must be a top priority to prevent the Russians from establishing bases on Swedish or -best of all- Norwegian territory." [?]

Sweden could not join an Atlantic Pact, because it should loose its complete independence. The Foreign Minister was of the opinion that it was to the

advantage of both East and West to leave Scandinavia out of a new World War and on that assumption the Swedish policy should be based. With regard to the Danish Sound Undén remarked that it was not of direct strategic importance in a Third World War.

"Personally I emphasized that the Baltic Sea from a Russian point of view preferably ought to be kept closed and that the Western Powers of course can not imagine to enter the Baltic to wage an offensive war against the Soviets there." [?] <sup>26</sup>

Would Undén have taken another standpoint if he had not been convinced of Western help in times of crisis? Probably we will never know but the fact remains that he was convinced that the West -for its own sake- should come to the rescue and that he, on the other hand, did not expect a Russian assault in the near future. So why then should the pragmatic Undén have opted for the Atlantic membership?

## 6.2. Anglo-American Pressure.

Whether Great Britain and the USA put pressure on Sweden to opt for the Atlantic Pact or a Western linked SDU is a controversial issue. Historians have been able to present material confirming either opinion. I do not doubt that pressure was exercised because both the UK and the US were interested in the joining of Sweden.

First of all there is the well-known remark of US Foreign Secretary Marshall to John D. Hickerson, his Director of the Office on European Affairs, "to lay off on such outspoken tactics with Sweden" with that of course confirming that Hickerson exercised pressure, and there is the statement of the Foreign Minister Bevin, that:

"it remains my view that these countries (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) should be left to decide freely on the policy they will follow and that no pressure should be used to influence them to adopt a course which they themselves do not conceive to be desirable." <sup>27</sup>

There is, perhaps, no reason to doubt the sincerity of those statements of both Foreign Secretaries but Undén and his Staff in the Utrikesdepartementet in Stockholm did not deal daily (in fact hardly at all) with Bevin and Marshall.

Among the (influential) officials they regularly met or got messages from through the ambassadors Häggblöf and Boheman there were some who did not



hesitate to use pressure, especially by threatening with non-aid (i.e. no weapon deliveries). The remarks of Bevin and Marshall are in this matter therefore of little or no importance because what really counts is how the Swedes experienced the attitude of London and Washington.

Men like Hankey, Sargent, Hickerson, as well as the reports of the Swedish ambassadors of conversations with those men made a large contribution to the opinion of the Swedish policymakers. That Undén experienced certain aspects of the British politics as pressure cannot be doubted. In his diary he wrote, after having received a telegram from Boheman who reported that Bevin in an interview had asserted that Sweden exercised pressure on Norway and Denmark: "It is of course the other way round. It is England that exercises pressure!" Equally clear is Undén's reaction on an American *démarche* with regard to weapons which should not be delivered to a neutral SDU. "Pressure!"<sup>28</sup> Further it is known that the US ambassador in Stockholm, Matthews, and his Counsellor of Embassy, Cumming, waged a "private war" against neutrality which went so far that they threatened to bomb Sweden if that, in US eyes, might be considered necessary.

The Americans exercised more pressure than the British which might be due to the fact that they were less well informed about Swedish policy than the English were. Furthermore, it is hard to believe that London and Washington, which both had an enormous interest in a (at least partly) Scandinavian association with the Atlantic Pact, would sit down and wait, with folded arms, until it pleased those countries to join the Atlantic community.

The pressure on Norway might not have been too hard because was not necessary. Lange and Bevin were on excellent terms with each other and it's not impossible that the latter might have relied on Lange's influence on Norwegian politics to bring the matter finally to a -for the Atlantic Pact-favourable end. It is quite likely that Lange was flattered by the illusion that he got secret information which was not being divulged to Denmark and Sweden and it is equally likely that the Anglo Americans made a psychological use of the Norwegian sensitivity with regard to Sweden, due to the fact that Norway had been under the Swedish crown (the Union lasted until 1905) and therefore extremely sensitive for English and American suggestion that Sweden tried to exercise pressure on them.

Already in May 1948 Boheman reported that the English (he was referring to Sir Orme Sargent and Hankey) were remarkably well informed about the Norwegian points of view. They had warned Oslo that it would be regarded as "very disquieting" if the "door to the West would be closed" but at the same time they seemed to be convinced that such "with regard to Norway would not happen." Boheman added as his personal opinion that Great Britain via Norway should try to prevent to come a neutral SDU into being.<sup>29</sup> The English Ambassador, Collier, had warned Lange immediately after the first SDU deliberations in Stockholm (May) and asked him "in what kind of madness" the Norwegian government had engaged itself.

Also Denmark was strongly and openly warned by Mc Neil, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, reported Erik Boheman from London, not to enter a SDU on "Undénian lines" and Sir Orme Sargent had taken the trouble to meet the Danish Ambassador Reventlov with a similar message. Mc Neil had also warned Boheman's Norwegian colleague, Prebensen, that English weapon deliveries would depend on the future Swedish attitude. That was not true, according to Boheman: "It may be added", he telegraphed,

"that I through a direct *démarche* to Mc Neil have got off radar-material which is hit by a general English export prohibition to all countries, including the Benelux."<sup>30</sup>

Also the so-called *pré-avis* (warning) may be considered as an at least psychological and moral means of pressure to draw Denmark and Norway over the line.<sup>31</sup>

Both Marshall and Bevin emphasized that the *pré-avis* was not meant to exercise pressure.<sup>32</sup> They might have been sincere but the question remains why the *démarche* was done. Fact is that the *pré-avis* was related directly with the weapon deliveries. The military planners had to present their programm for the American Congress in January 1949. Bearing that in mind the message is clear: Weapon deliveries could only be made if they were planned in good time and if Norway and Denmark wanted their piece of the cake they had to decide quickly.

Marshall and Bevin both agreed that the SDU negotiations should run as planned but expressed hope that the SDU talks would be finished before January 1949.<sup>33</sup> The *pré-avis* produced some effect in Oslo. Lange agreed that the SDU talks had to be speeded up and it was for that reason that he wanted to inform Stockholm about the *pré-avis*. He hoped that this informa-

tion might induce the Swedes to accelerate the SDU negotiations<sup>34</sup> while Hedtoft had advised Erlander because he was worried about foreign influences on the negotiations.

Lange did not keep it a secret either that he wanted to speed up the SDU talks. He told Beck-Friis that Scandinavia should take a stand about an American inquiry with regard to cooperation with the West and said that he expected a new inquiry shortly after the inauguration of the winner of the 1948 president elections. That's why he considered it important that the SDU talks should go as fast as possibly. It was probably no coincidence that Hickerson again, on Christmas Eve 1948, informed Norway that it could expect an invitation to join the Atlantic Pact negotiations.<sup>35</sup> John Hickerson had a personal aversion against the Swedish neutrality. Boheman, the in August 1948 newly appointed minister in Washington, described Hickerson at his first visit as "I would like to say aggressive." Hickerson had followed Swedish politics with "considerable dismay" and asked Boheman if he wanted his view on neutrality in diplomatic language or in "plain American." It was because of this meeting that Marshall warned that "Department officials lay off on such outspoken pressure tactics with Sweden."<sup>36</sup>

Hickerson was not the only State Department official who took a personal dislike to Swedish neutrality. Boheman reported that

"From what I have heard from my Norwegian and French colleagues the top of the Swedish Foreign Office is becoming steady more impopular in leading circles. This may in the first place be thanks to the triangle Hickerson, Matthews and Cumming."<sup>37</sup>

Like Hickerson Matthews declared that America "wished to avoid any appearance of exerting pressure (...)"<sup>38</sup> but in practice it appeared to be much different. Matthews and his Counsellor of Embassy Hugh S. Cumming waged a "private war"<sup>39</sup> against the evils of neutrality and did their utmost to scare Sweden over to the West. Matthews had been Hickerson's predecessor as Director of State Departments Office of European Affairs and came to Sweden in the summer of 1947.

Until then the Americans had only a legation in Sweden. Matthews had tight connections with European Affairs at State and it is not unlikely that his personal views were shared by many of those whose immediate chief he had been. Matthews disgust of neutrality was not limited to that of Sweden, as became clear in one of his conversations with Undén, who at one occasion

had pointed out to him that also the USA had known a long tradition of neutrality. Matthews remarked that he had disliked the American neutrality as well because it had been just as wrong as the Swedish.

At the same occasion Matthews put forward that the Russian -Swedish relations would improve if Sweden should join an Atlantic community. In that case the Soviets would know exactly how far they could go.<sup>40</sup>

In March 1948 Matthews and Cumming declared to everybody who wanted to listen that the threat of a new war was real. The Dutch Ambassador, who knew his American colleague quite well, reported to the Hague that they did so to scare the Swedes "out of their wits."<sup>41</sup> Both diplomats did not hesitate to threaten that the US would destroy Swedish industry if she deemed it necessary to do so in a next war, for example if Norway and Denmark would be occupied by the Soviets.<sup>42</sup>

Within three months after his arrival in Sweden Cumming had decided that Swedish policy was determined by *Russophobia*. He also declared that the State Department thought that every country, which stood not clearly on the side of the US, would be considered as being a part of the Eastern bloc. "Shameless methods of pressure." was Undén's reaction.<sup>43</sup>

The Berlin crisis of the summer of 1948 again offered Cumming an excellent opportunity to attempt "consciously and openly to intimidate Sweden into joining the Western Alliance."<sup>44</sup> Matthews went so far as to hint that he had information that the Finnish Prime Minister was

"in fact acting as Mr. Undén's 'stooge' and beating the neutrality drum at the latter's request."<sup>45</sup>

The behaviour of the two produced some effect although it remains an open question if the reactions were what they had hoped for. Boheman reported a widespread suspicion towards Sweden in Washington which, he said, was fed by Cumming. Erlander called him a "fawning slanderer" who "poisons the atmosphere" in Stockholm. The Prime Minister was on the whole very displeased with Matthew's "war of nerves" against neutrality and was of the opinion that Washington was "foolishly" informed from its Stockholm Embassy "about what we think and believe" which he very much regretted.<sup>46</sup>

Also the colleagues of the two American diplomats were not impressed by their skills and judgement with regard to Swedish politics and wondered if they were the right men in the right place. Their poor judgement cannot be

blamed to lack of staff at the embassy which numbered to about 190, including Service Attachés.

Cumming thought that the Swedes were difficult to deal with because of their assumption that they knew so much about Russia "whereas", he remarked "in fact, the contrary is the case."<sup>47</sup> That statement reveals probably more about Cumming himself than about the Swedes.

The US admiral Stevens doubted that "an aggressive type like Matthews is the right man for us in Sweden" and the Dutch minister Texeira reported "On the whole I deem the mission of Ambassador Matthews until now not a success." He was, true enough, a fine colleague, "surely capable" but he used "the wrong tactic" in dealing with Sweden in "those great political questions." Texeira considered the English approach much better.<sup>48</sup>

Matthews and Cumming favoured two weapons in their crusade against Swedish neutrality: no weapon deliveries (non aid) in case of a neutral SDU and the "carrot and stick" treatment whereby the stick (no military or economic aid) was meant for Sweden and the carrot (favourable treatment) for Norway and Denmark. In the words of Matthews:

"I believe that in our thinking and in our policy we should carefully distinguish between 'neutral' Sweden on the one hand and Norway and Denmark on the other. Any gestures of aid to the latter coupled with refusals to aid Sweden will help shake Swedish neutrality."<sup>49</sup>

Ignoring was part of the carrot and stick policy. The US Navy paid a visit to Norway but did not to Sweden.<sup>50</sup> Intentionally Matthews did not visit Undén from about July 1948 to February 4 1949. He did however appear at the annual dinner at Undén's Foreign Office where he happened to sit just opposite Undén who said to him in a very friendly voice and so loudly that everyone could hear: "I have not seen you for a long time Mr. Ambassador. I hope you will come and see me soon."<sup>51</sup> Of course that was of not the reaction Matthews had hoped for. Over and over again Matthews repeated that "the cure for isolationism is isolation."<sup>52</sup> Early in January 1949 he seems to have thought that his approach would be successful. He appeared to be very much against a possible Anglo-American invitation to Sweden to join the North Atlantic Pact because

"there were many signs of effectiveness of our tactics of showing indifference to Swedish policy all of which would be undone if we made any approach to Swedes at this time. Let the Norwegians and Danes tell

the Swedes about North Atlantic Pact if and when the time seems proper to them. I consider this of greatest importance from point of view Swedish psychology if we hope for eventual Swedish association in pact."<sup>53</sup>

Matthews had warned Sweden according to the US radio "to stop sabotaging the North Atlantic alliance". He should have told, according to commentator Drew Pearson, that

"US may stop all Marshall Plan Aid if Sweden continues trying to persuade Norway and Denmark to join a neutral Scandinavian Pact instead of joining us."<sup>54</sup>

The chief pressure put upon Sweden was the threat of non-aid which worked very well with regard to Norway but appeared to be useless in the struggle to draw Sweden into the Atlantic Pact.

The big difference between the two was that Oslo believed the non-aid story while Stockholm did not. The Swedish government was convinced that the US and Great Britain would counteract their own interests by not delivering arms and believed that the West was best served by a strong up-to-date Scandinavian defence system and considered the threat of non-aid as a purely tactical move. Besides, Sweden possessed already a strong army, air force and navy and had a well developed defence industry.

The Swedes were however not able to produce technically advanced military material such as radar and for her raw materials it was dependent on the USA and the UK but the latter did not take the same stand regarding weapon deliveries as Washington. During an UN meeting in Paris Undén and Lange discussed the non-aid:

"Mr Lange referred to the difficulty for Norway to build up a defence without priority for buying in the USA. I [Undén] remarked that maybe one should not be too nervous in this respect. It ought to be an interest of the USA to make it possible for Norway as well as for Sweden, to strengthen her defence, as it was well known that our peoples were determined to defend themselves with all possible strength. Of course a refusal of licenses might be used as a means of pressure, but it seemed unlikely to me that our countries, attached or not to an Atlantic Pact, in the long run would be denied the buying of war materials.(..) I told Mr. Lange to point out to Mr. Marshall how unmotivated it would be, to deny Norway for political reasons to buy war materials, regardless if

it were attached to an Atlantic Pact or to a Scandinavian defence pact."<sup>55</sup>

Secretary of State Marshall, who was also present in Paris advised Undén that, according to the Vandenberg Resolution, which sanctified American participation in a regional security pact, arms supplies could not be made to Sweden upon which Undén remarked that he did not appreciate attempts by the US to influence Swedish policy by making conditions for arms deliveries.

Lange however had been more impressed by Marshall's words which inspired Undén to the remark that: "We might say the Americans that, if we could not buy from them, we would turn to the East" but that was unacceptable for Norway. Once again Undén pointed out that if it came down to it he did not expect great difficulties in obtaining war material from the West and once again he warned Lange and Rasmussen

"for a development which would mean that the US decided upon Scandinavian territory and that Russia for that reason might get the feeling that the borders of the USA ran along the Norwegian border. (..) It is better policy to try to create a calm situation than to aggravate the frictions by pulling the Americans over here."

Lange in his turn answered that it would be a relief for Norway if the US border was extend to the Norwegian-Russian border and that the biggest difference between the Swedish and Norwegian attitudes was that Norway saw it as her moral duty to show solidarity with the Western democracies.<sup>56</sup>

Undén's conviction that weapons would be furnished because it was in the interest of the West that (also a neutral) Scandinavia had an adequate defence can be found elsewhere.<sup>57</sup>

Neither Erlander expected real difficulties regarding the deliveries of war materials.<sup>58</sup> Stockholm was however well aware of the importance of weapon deliveries for Norway and its major concern was that Norway would take the menace of no deliveries serious.

Undén himself did not like the expression "American aid" as he explained to Boheman, because it was incorrect. Sweden had always paid cash for US arms deliveries and intended to do so also in the future: Also Sweden exported arms and considered that "normal foreign trade."<sup>59</sup>

Matthews took of course full advantage of the non-aid opportunity. He visited Hans Beck-Friis at the Foreign Office to give him an "informal but official" message which was based on "some loose thinking" as regards the US

"military policy". Informal but official means that Matthews read his message from a paper. The US government did of course not want to influence Swedish policy, he said, but to avoid misunderstandings he wanted to make clear that

"any Scandinavian defence arrangement based on neutrality would be incompatible with the intent of the Vandenberg Resolution and of course would disqualify the signatories from getting any American aid, at least until the requirements of a collective arrangement (an Atlantic Pact) would be fully met."<sup>60</sup>

Erlander considered this message as

"probably a new, maybe, serious element against our neutrality. I imagine that no one here feels specially surprised. We had well expected something along those lines after the presidential elections, as foolishly as Washington must be informed from Stockholm about what we think and believe."<sup>61</sup>

Matthews stated as well that the Norwegian and Danish governments would receive a similar message but that did not appear to be correct: They were only informed about Matthew's démarche in Stockholm but did not receive a similar oral message.<sup>62</sup>

In this connection it might be illuminating to pay attention to Cumming's visit to the deputy chief of the defence staff, colonel Thord Bonde, on the same day Matthews saw Beck-Friis (26-11-1948). Cumming declared that the Swedish policy was not realistic. Weapondeliveries could no longer be counted on because of the Vandenberg Resolution which was accepted by the American Congress that summer. Besides: Scandinavia had, so explained Cumming, been subject to a strategic revaluation and in that concept "Sweden was no longer of any interest at all." Bonde wondered if it was not more risky to take an interest in Denmark than in Sweden whereupon Cumming replied that the US was only interested in Greenland.

Exactly one week later (3-12-1948) Cumming came to see secretary Beck-Friis with roughly the same story that he told colonel Bonde: No assistance in time of war, no deliveries in peace-time and that a strategic revaluation had taken place ("if I understood him right about a year ago."). Cumming expressed himself "somewhat vague" and Beck-Friis asked if he meant the whole of Scandinavia but Cumming refused to be clear and did not want to go



into that. Beck-Friis got the impression that only Sweden was meant.<sup>63</sup> It looks as if the duo Matthews-Cumming now had intensified their private war.

Undén reacted in a letter to Boheman in Washington to Matthew's démarche. Undén expected no real changes in the US policy and thought that Sweden also in the future would be supplied with raw materials and other commodities important for the production of defence materials in Sweden.

"A discriminating treatment of Sweden in this respect would give us the impression that our country for political reasons would be put in a not favoured class by itself."

Undén did not believe in this because the measure would be counterproductive to the Americans. Stockholm did see no reason to abandon her policy but Boheman was warned to operate extremely careful and got detailed outlines of how to deal with his contacts in the State Department. He should avoid to ask State for definitions and definitive answers.

It was emphasized that a principal US refusal to export war material to a neutral SDU probably would bring about an increased schism in Scandinavia "which seemed to be little consistent with the normal guiding principals of the US foreign policy." Boheman was more or less advised to avoid Marshall because

"There could be a certain risk that he prepared himself to answer off-hand the Swedish governments request for precision of the concept of 'American aid' and also in other respect immediately would take a stand to the problems concerned and in that way , may be, lock himself in a position which is, we hope from our side not yet fixed."

Stockholm still hoped that its points of view after a further examination, would get more comprehension from the Americans "than what can be deduced from Mr. Matthew's message."<sup>64</sup>

Boheman did as he was told and visited Hickerson who also referred to the Vandenberg Resolution. Boheman pointed out that Stockholm believed that Matthew's démarche was intended "to torpedo the planned Scandinavian cooperation." Hickerson answered that he understood Sweden's difficult position but that all European countries should unite, or that they otherwise would be lost. Even if not all three Scandinavian states would join a Western alliance

"it would be in any case very much desirable that Norway and Denmark

would join, especially due to the strategic interests of those countries."<sup>65</sup>

A few days later Boheman once again took up this meeting with Hickerson in a letter to Hans Beck-Friis. Again he mentioned that the USA wanted Norway and Denmark to join in the Atlantic Pact but added now that it was believed in Washington that after the Danish and Norwegian adherence the position of Sweden would become so isolated that it sooner or later would choose to go same way. Boheman took the non-aid seriously which he had not done a month before.<sup>66</sup>

When Boheman became ambassador in Washington in August 1948 he had been convinced that the State Department first of all wanted a Danish and Norwegian membership in the Atlantic Pact. But after a few conversations with Lovett, Undersecretary of State, and Hickerson in October and November he believed to perceive a growing understanding for Stockholm and in a letter to Hans Beck-Friis on November 11, he did not even want to completely exclude the possibility that State would accept a SDU without connections to the Atlantic Pact.<sup>67</sup>

Ambassador Hägglöf in London informed Hankey about Matthew's démarche but Hankey did not feel obliged to defend the wording of Matthews' message. Hankey emphasized that the British government hoped for a positive result of the SDU negotiations and he said he was sure that Washington wanted the same. Hägglöf however stressed that Matthew's statement in Stockholm had evoked contrary impression and that the Swedish government had wondered whether the USA wished to obstruct or downright prevent a positive result of the Scandinavian defence negotiations.<sup>68</sup>

Also the British Ambassador in Stockholm emphasized during a meeting with Undén that neither Matthews nor the Foreign Office wanted to exercise pressure on Sweden. Farquhar, who had just met Bevin in London, said that Bevin hoped for positive results so that a SDU could be realized and that it in one way or another would ally itself to the West.<sup>69</sup> It is evident that "positive" in this matter represents two opposite views, respectively a Western allied and a non Western allied SDU. A purely neutral SDU was in fact no less unacceptable to London as it was to Washington. It was only the diplomacy that was different, more skillful and not so clumsy as the American approach. Farquhar stresses the fact that the West did not refuse to sell

weapons but that it was merely a matter of resources and that it therefore was natural that the allies would get priority, something that Undén could not understand and he wondered why the deliveries should depend on Sweden's ties with the West because, seen from the Western point of view, it ought to be

"an advantage if we militarily should be as strong as possible, so that we could offer an effective resistance in case of an attack."<sup>70</sup>

What was the truth about the often returning statement that weapons supplies were short and that deliveries would first be made to the allies? Right after the war, in 1945-1946, there had been a big surplus of war materials but that situation changed in 1947 when the relations with the East grew tenser and soon the situation arose that Great Britain could cover neither her own requirements nor that of her allies.

Swedish arms production was now considered very important not least because it would help covering the Norwegian and Danish requirements. In an early draft of the Bevin speech the Scandinavian countries had also been mentioned as possible members in a Western alliance but later left out again because London foresaw Scandinavian demands for weapon deliveries which Great Britain was not able to meet.<sup>71</sup>

So the shortage was real but so was the strategic importance of Scandinavia, neutral or not. Weapon deliveries were in the interest of the West as Undén and Erlander had declared and their thesis was confirmed by the British Chiefs of Staff although the reservation was made that the requirements of the Western Union Powers had to be met first.<sup>72</sup>

During the Karlstad meeting Erlander made the cynical remark that if the Western weapon resources were too small, they would not automatically increase if Norway and Denmark joined the West.<sup>73</sup> It seems quite unlikely that the deliveries to the Western Pact powers would have decreased considerably if the relative small defences of Norway and Denmark would have been supplied with the weapons they needed.

Also the deliveries to Sweden would on the whole have been relatively small because it had one of the best post-war defence systems in Europe. The problem was more a political than a military one and the non-aid question has been more an American than a British matter. Swedish purchases in the USA were relatively small so it was no real disaster for Stockholm that the USA

were reluctant to sell. Great Britain was Sweden's main supplier of arms, especially planes, but in the UK the Swedes did not meet great difficulties.<sup>74</sup>

In the leading English military circles there were advocates for deliveries to Sweden. The Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence, captain Baker Creswell, told the Swedish naval attaché in London that they were convinced of the importance of a military strong Sweden. Asdic, radar and radio equipment had already been sold to the Swedish navy and Baker Creswell did not expect great difficulties for the future but he could give no guarantees because Washington had also influence in such matters. "In other words, the whole thing was not a military but a political problem." reported the attaché. Also the Director of Naval Intelligence, Rear Admiral Longley-Cook had nothing, as far as he was concerned, against deliveries. Unfortunately it was not the British Admiralty alone that made the decisions, sighed the naval attaché: also the Foreign Office had to give its consent and the attaché was afraid that the answer would be "a more or less direct echo of what the powerful circles in Washington have to say."

But the US deliveries to the Swedish Navy were so small that he had good hope to get what he wanted. The naval man reported also that his Danish colleague, together with the Ambassador, had lunched with Hankey who then appeared to have full understanding for a SDU (in February, the SDU failure was a fact and it was almost certain that Norway was going West) but nevertheless would like a "more flexible interpretation of the concept of neutrality." What the Foreign Office had in mind was that the SDU members

"'confidentially', that is wholly 'privately' and thus non officially, admit to certain cooperation with the Western Powers with regard to a joint planning."

If the Scandinavians, and first of all the Swedes, accepted that solution, the English standpoint vis à vis a non allied SDU would become much more favourable but Hankey feared that if they could not come to terms the deliveries to Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries would become "negligible small, probably non existent."<sup>75</sup>

Those "in power" in Washington who decided on weapon deliveries were according to Boheman a small group of "policymakers"<sup>76</sup> and their views could change somewhat from person to person and from time to time.<sup>77</sup> Something similar can be said of the British, who as regards the non-aid, often referred to Washington<sup>78</sup> in that way avoiding a straight answer. Illuminating however

for the more realistic British view is a letter from Bateman of the Foreign Office to ambassador Farquhar in Stockholm. It could have been the words of Erlander or Undén:

"It is really in our general interest to keep Sweden as strong as possible, even if she does not join an Atlantic Pact (...). Furthermore, the stronger Sweden is, the smaller our commitment to Norway will be, if Norway enters the Atlantic Pact, (...). In point of fact the Chiefs of Staff recently advised that we should continue to supply arms to Sweden."

Bateman added that allies should get first priority. Sweden had a lower priority than Norway and Denmark but that would become relevant only if there was a conflict of requirements but such a conflict was not actual at the moment. Bateman informed Farquhar that radar supplies could not begin "much before 1950 by which time the position may have changed" and both countries could be supplied.

"It would therefore be pointless for us to make a show of cutting off arms from Sweden now and yet to supply them in the future."

Bateman added as well that that line "seems to be in accordance with the more flexible attitude which the Americans are now adopting."<sup>79</sup> There is little doubt that arms deliveries were used, especially by the US, as a means of pressure to turn Scandinavia to the West. From my point of view it is less important what the real motives have been. What counts here is the Swedish experience: the way they felt the pressure of the outside world to abandon their neutrality. That's why it is not so important that Bevin in a personal message to the English ambassadors in the three Scandinavian capitals declared that he, after having once again read the records of his meetings with the Scandinavian ministers in Paris, March 1948, still took the same approach:

"It remains my view that these countries should be left to decide freely on the policy they will follow and that no pressure should be used to influence them to adopt a course which they themselves do not conceive to be desirable."<sup>80</sup>

The reaction of Farquhar was furious:

"(..) I may be wrong, but I feel that I am being censured and reproved. (..) If there is anything in my dispatches , telegrams or letters which make you think that I have gone contrary in any way to the Secretary

of State's directive (..) or said anything to the Swedes which I not ought to have said, please quote it back to me as evidence against me."<sup>81</sup>

It seems that the English, especially Orme Sargent and Hankey, and it were those two men who Boheman (and later Hägglöf) regularly met, tried to prevent the establishment of a neutral SDU through Norway which was much more sensitive to the non-aid problem than Sweden. Boheman reported to Undén that both policymakers stood in close contact with Lange and his department and that Sargent considered the Swedish position absurd. The military importance of the Scandinavian states was  $0 + 0 + 0 = 0$  and could never become more than zero, whereupon Boheman answered that England + France + Benelux was  $1 + 0 + 0 + 0 + 0 = 1$  and never could become more than one. Boheman was convinced that the English believed to have Norway on their side and he wondered if Lange did use his English connections to try to get Sweden on his line.

Through his talks with Orme Sargent and Hankey Boheman concluded that the attitude of the London Foreign Office was thoroughly discussed. His own conclusion surprised him because Bevin and Mc Neil had shown at least some understanding for the Swedish position. Boheman thought it hard to believe "that this so well tuned department not also reflects the attitude of the political representatives."<sup>82</sup>

About one month later when Bevin met Boheman on a party he asked "Well, how is Mr. Undén going and his neutrality?" Bevin explained that cooperation between Scandinavia and Great Britain and other countries would develop in the course of time in a natural way. "I do not want to hurry anybody but do not shut doors!" One day later Boheman was called to Bevin who received him "without a trace of his common joviality." This time Bevin appeared to be worried about the discussions in Sweden and warned it not to exercise pressure on Denmark and Norway (and added of course, as usual, that he did not want to exercise pressure). He also said that he considered the Swedish attitude vis à vis Western cooperation unfriendly and playing into the hands of the Soviets. Bevin also put forward that the mood in his own Labour party as regards Sweden became bitter. The opinion within the party was that the Swedish government would "shoot as willingly to the West as to the East."

Finally Boheman reported that the Swedish air force could expect "great difficulties" with regard to her purchases in Great Britain and that "These difficulties surely had, at least partially, a political background."<sup>83</sup> In that connection political background can hardly be interpreted otherwise as "pressure".

The English refusal in December 1948 to sell *surplus material* (among other Baily bridge- and some amphibious material)<sup>84</sup> can hardly have removed the feeling that political motives were involved.

What happened in fact with the actual deliveries? There appeared to be little difficulties as regards Sweden's principal supplier, Great Britain. Neither the USA took a negative attitude towards Sweden concerning the question of war material, Undén learned from defence minister Vougth in June 1949. Vougth also appeared to be quite satisfied with the English deliveries.<sup>85</sup> Hankey was pleased to inform Hägglöf that the Swedish military had showed willingness to cooperate and also the allied states had, in studying the defence problems of Norway and Denmark, paid much attention to the position of Sweden and the importance of its military preparations. On Hägglöf's question about weapon deliveries Hankey answered that as far as he knew everything went fine.

In an indirect way Hägglöf touched upon the question that Danish and Norwegian military authorities had showed themselves surprised vis à vis the Foreign Office that Sweden both with regard to deliveries and information seemed to be treated as well as the Pact members Denmark and Norway.

Hankey did not give a straight answer but Hägglöf got the impression

"that the British authorities did not see the necessity of differentiating between the Scandinavian countries"

and added that no matter how one looked at the problem the Scandinavian countries from a Western point of view remained "parts of one single strategy problem."<sup>86</sup> So, as soon as the problem with regard to Norway's and Denmark's adherence to the Nato was solved, the path for deliveries to Sweden was cleared. The conclusion must be that non-aid not only was felt by the Swedes as pressure but that it also was *meant* as pressure or at least more than an incentive not to hamper Norway's adherence to the Western Alliance. It depends on how one wants to define pressure.

The different approach from the US and Great Britain was not only caused by the different historical relations with Scandinavia, the private opinions of

policymakers at State and the London Foreign Office or at the embassies in Scandinavia (Matthews, Cumming). There was, as far as England was concerned, also an economic aspect. Before the autumn of 1948, 70 British Vampire planes plus 60 spare engines had been delivered. The contracts had been signed already in January 1946. Breach of contracts would also have resulted in juridical difficulties. A worried Lovett of the State Department delivered an aide-mémoire to the British ambassador in which was established that the orders from RAF, Commonwealth, and Brussels Treaty governments alone would not be sufficient to enable the English aircraft industry to keep going. Countries that were important for England's strategic defence were also to be supplied. According to Lovett the British government had earlier that year considered to delay the supply of war materials to Sweden

"in order to influence the attitude of the Swedish government on the possible association of Sweden in collective security arrangements of the Atlantic area. They had decided however, that there was nothing to be gained by trying to press the Swedish government on this matter before the Swedish elections in September."<sup>87</sup>

Until 1946 the British had followed a policy of low military priority with regard to Sweden because of the Swedish attitude in the Second World War. Ironically, rumours that Washington was interested in selling military planes and radar equipment to Sweden caused a change in British policy because they were afraid that the Americans should remove England from the Swedish weapon market. Swedish crowns meant hard currency and this was something that the British could use.<sup>88</sup>

Finally the British had a small hope of a change of government in the autumn of 1948 and it was expected that in an eventual non-Socialistic government Erik Boheman would succeed Undén as Foreign Minister. Boheman was considered to be pro Western Alliance.<sup>89</sup>

### 6.3. Coordination.

The pressure which was exercised on Sweden to influence her to choose for an Atlantic Pact was for a number of reasons not very successful. The Swedes were first of all not impressed by the threats, simply because they did not believe them and secondly the Swedish demand for US weapons was so relatively small that the American threats were in fact doomed to fail.



But also the (non) coordination between the different policy-makers at the State Department, between the State Department and the Defence Department as well as between London and Washington played a role. It has been remarked before that the cooperation at State with regard to the Atlantic Pact was not always optimal.<sup>90</sup> I have already referred to Bevin and Marshall who both claimed to know nothing about the so-called *pré-avis*.

The beginning of president Truman's second term in the White House, January 1949, caused some changes in the State Department. Marshall retired as Secretary of State and Dean Acheson took over. Charles Bohlen, Counsellor of State Department, became Acheson's closest adviser instead of John Hickerson.

Bohlen shared Kennan's view of an Atlantic Pact as in the first place a political and not a military endeavour. Both men took a skeptical view at the Scandinavian membership of the Western Alliance and did not want, as Kennan expressed "to extend this alliance as far as possible - to jam it, so to speak, as close as possible to the Soviet borders."<sup>91</sup>

Bohlen said to Lange that

"arms would go to places where it was considered most advantageous for our security and that of the world, and that we do not as yet have commitments for sending arms to any of the Pact countries."<sup>92</sup>

Bohlen's policy differed in that respect considerable from Hickerson's and Lovett's who had, according to the Norwegian historian Grethe Værnø been under partial pressure from the military establishment and the National Security Council.<sup>93</sup>

Before Bohlen became more powerful as Acheson's adviser he had, together with his close friend George Kennan<sup>94</sup>, formed the opposition within the State Department and represented a fundamental different view on the relations with the Soviet Union than Hickerson, Lovett and Marshall had done. The skeptical view of the former on the Scandinavian membership was quite logical in the light of their view that the danger to the Western world was not primarily a military one.

"Military union should not be the starting point. It should flow from the political, economic and spiritual union - not vice versa."<sup>95</sup>

Hickerson and the circle around him, as well as Marshall himself, the old general, had analyzed the situation in military terms.

In Paris Marshall had told Undén "in strong words" about the lack of "decency" that characterized the Soviet policy. "One could not negotiate with the Soviets and trust that they should adhere to a settlement or dealt fairly." Undén remarked that Marshall made the impression on him of a moralist and "a military in a rather high degree" because of the way he expressed himself.<sup>96</sup> But it was Hickerson and Lovett, not Marshall, who actually determined the policy with regard to Scandinavia.<sup>97</sup> Geir Lundestad has found evidence that

"When Marshall held talks with other foreign ministers, he consistently asked the department in Washington for recommendations on what to say. More remarkable, almost without exception he followed the lead of his advisers. (...) Finally, even if Marshall had possessed the will to carry out a more personal policy, strong countervailing pressure existed to a policy favoring a Scandinavia with very limited ties with the West. There was the attitude of Lovett and Hickerson within the State Department itself, supported by the embassies in Oslo and Stockholm."<sup>98</sup>

In 1976 and 1977 Hickerson has told Grethe Værnø in private conversation that his purpose had not been to get Sweden into the pact but that the Swedes should leave Norway and Denmark in peace. Matthews policy however pointed to the opposite direction.<sup>99</sup>

When Acheson became the new Secretary of State he knew little about the Atlantic discussions. When he took office in January 1949, Lovett, one of the driving forces behind a close relation of Scandinavia with the West, left and Bohlen, with his different view of the Pact, became his primary adviser. Acheson's policy in February 1949, during the meeting with the ambassadors of the Atlantic Pact, where also Lange was present, was in fact the policy of Bohlen.<sup>100</sup>

Another result of the November elections of 1948 had been that Senator Vandenberg, an ardent supporter of the stepping stones theory and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee was replaced by Tom Conally who cared much less about the stepping stones than Vandenberg had done. Vandenberg's influence on the US foreign policy had been considerable. It is also probable that Acheson was more realistic than his predecessor with regard to Sweden and has realized that Swedish policy was inflexible. With Acheson as Secretary of State the US policy vis à vis Sweden became less rigid.

The non-optimal coordination between London and Washington is clearly illustrated by the delivery of Vampire planes and radar equipment. Until 1948 the USA contrary to Great Britain, had taken little interest in Scandinavia. On the other hand the polar strategy and bases policy had been much less important for London than it had been for Washington.<sup>101</sup> The UK and the US had, in short, quite different political, military and economic, interests in the Scandinavian area, and that might have been the major reason for the failure of the US pressure on Sweden.

The reason that England did not carry out its threats with regard to weapon deliveries was due to the fact that she could not afford to do so. On the other hand she also realized that it was to her own advantage to have a strong Sweden.

#### 6.4. Reactions on the SDU.

Was there any opposition against the SDU within the social democratic Erlander government? There were indeed a few members who thought that military cooperation with the neighbouring countries went too far. The cabinet ministers (statsråd) Quensel and Mossberg, like the ministers of agriculture, Sköld, and of finance, Wigforss, emphasized that neutrality should be the prerequisite for the SDU talks. Wigforss was the most influential of those men and remained doubtful about the desirability of a SDU all through the negotiations while Sköld seems to have changed his mind.<sup>102</sup> Wigforss, "Wigge" in Undén's diaries, was a close friend to Undén. They often discussed the foreign policy and most of the time they agreed. The SDU seems to have been an exception. Wigforss wanted to stick to an isolated neutrality and did not want to extend the idea of Swedish neutrality to the rest of Scandinavia because the chance that Sweden would be drawn into a next war would only increase.

A few social democrats in the Riksdag argued along the same line. Some feared that the SDU was the beginning of a definite "drifting away" to the West.<sup>103</sup> Others had, according to Undén, not realised that he had been serious with regard to the establishment of a SDU.<sup>104</sup> Only two social democratic members of the Riksdag, (1944 elections 46,6 - 1948: 46,1%) Nerman and Lundestad, pleaded for an adherence to the Western Pact.<sup>105</sup>

The main Social Democratic newspaper Morgon Tidningen (MT) acted as the governments mouth-piece. It did not only function as *his master's voice*, it

was sometimes his master's voice (in *casu* Undén) although only few people knew it. Herbert Tingsten, editor in chief, of the leading liberal newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* (DN) never knew it. In his MT editorials Undén called himself "Mr. Undén" or "foreign minister". Tingsten was most of the time referred to as "Mr. Tingsten". Sometimes he showed himself "surprised" about certain "exposures" of the foreign minister.<sup>106</sup> The social democratic newspapers, the so called A press, were owned by the SPD and *Landsorganisationen* (the Swedish workers union) and appointments of new editors were first discussed within the party management.<sup>107</sup> From Undén's diaries can be concluded that he was sensitive to utterances in the press<sup>108</sup> and that he could become irritated by a bad editorial in his own MT. On April 5 1949 he remarked that MT had a "rather unintelligent and bad analysis of the situation." He also noticed that the comments in the press on the Atlantic Pact were "ridiculously varying" from an almost "religious intonation" (DN and *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*, GHT, both liberal) to modest appreciation (*Svenska Dadbladet*, conservative).

The position of DN and GHT (but also *Expressen*) was not a reflection of the atmosphere in the Liberal Party (Folkpartiet, 1944 elections 12.9%, 1948 22.8%) at the Riksdag. Three FP representatives were pro Western Alliance.<sup>109</sup> During the discussions about the party's tactics in the election campaign of 1948, it was established by John Bergvall, member of the First Chamber of the Riksdag, that there were different opinions within the party as regards as the foreign policy. He wanted a formulation that covered the concept but it should be avoided that that formulation should give the SPD the occasion to call the members of Folkpartiet "warmongers".

Ohlin said during that meeting that the FP did not want to tie itself with regard to the neutrality line, but things would change if Sweden was attacked. He stressed that he did of course not expect an attack from the West.<sup>110</sup> Also earlier, probably in March or April, it had been established that Sweden should not enter a military alliance system but a few month later Ohlin appeared to have no objections against cooperation with the "Scandinavian brother countries". A suggestion to enter an alliance accompanied with a declaration that Sweden belonged to the West was called unacceptable by the FP leader.<sup>111</sup>

Remarkable is that Ohlin tried to suggest that he had been the one who had proposed a SDU and there was at least one within the party who believed him:

"Professor Hugo Osvald, Uppsala, expressed his pleasure and satisfaction about professor Ohlin's proposal for a certain defence cooperation with Norway."<sup>112</sup>

What had happened? Both Erlander and Undén have commented the affair. Undén describes in his diary how Ohlin, after having been informed at a meeting of party leaders that Undén should propose a SDU, had rushed out to recommend a Swedish - Norwegian military cooperation in a public speech.

"Much attention is being paid to 'prof Ohlin's proposal'. Strange that he has gone straight out from the foreign committee where I had put the question of Swedish-Danish-Norwegian inquiry of the possibility for a common defence, to shout the idea from the roofs as his proposal."<sup>113</sup>

Erlander put little confidence in the FP leader Ohlin: "who is going to accept any proposal that can be considered suitable for getting votes (...)." <sup>114</sup>

Folkpartiet supported the government, that was also confirmed by Erlander, but at the same time it stressed the point, contrary to the government, that the Scandinavian nations in a joint diplomatic action in the West should try to gain comprehension for a SDU concerning weapon deliveries.<sup>115</sup> At a meeting of the foreign committee on January 27, 1949 Ohlin and other members of Folkpartiet declared that American aid was a condition for their party's consent.<sup>116</sup> The exact atmosphere among FP's Riksdag members is difficult to establish from the records.<sup>117</sup> It seems that Ohlin to a certain degree blamed the government for the SDU failure. Looking back at the SDU negotiations on a meeting of the FP he recapitulated the matter and did not forget to mention that it had been he who had proposed that the SDU talks should start immediately. Unfortunately, according to Ohlin, the SDU committee was not established before October which

"must have had an injurious effect on the course of events. Some dear months were lost and the Norwegian hesitation was gradually beginning to show."

The Swedish position could have met much understanding in the US if it only was brought forward "in a suitable way" because it was, according to Ohlin "surprisingly easy to obtain understanding for the Swedish points of view in

the US." With reference to the Swedish foreign policy he remarked that it was not a strict and

"in all directions directed policy of neutrality (...). Our policy is not only alliance free but also West oriented."<sup>118</sup>

In his memoirs Ohlin says that he had not used the expression "West orientation" after the spring of 1949 because it caused confusion (p.318).

For Erlander the expression seems not have been confusing: "Ohlin and Elon Andersson indicated in several private conversations that their support of the government's policy was due to the fact that they saw in the defence pact an orientation towards the West! That is to say Dagens Nyheter!"<sup>119</sup>

Ohlin might, in his heart of hearts, have dreamt about an adherence to the Atlantic Pact but his party voted clearly against it. And yet most of the pro Atlantic Pact voters in Sweden could be found among the FP electorate: 40% The reason for that might have been that Dagens Nyheter was widespread among the Folkpartiet electorate.

Prime Minister Erlander has admitted to be afraid that Tingsten's campaign would influence the public opinion.<sup>120</sup> This fear might also have been the reason for Undén's (anonymous) polemic in MT. Erlander feared Tingsten's campaign although he apparently did not have a high opinion of the editor in chief of Dagens Nyheter:

"His style of writing is exactly adjusted to the half ignorant, half intellectual, half old housewife. He should be an excellent spokesman for unmarried woman teachers, who have not any prospects to get some children neither now nor in a future existence."<sup>121</sup>

The Canadian embassy in Moscow informed Ottawa that

"The most uncritically pro-American (...) Professor Tingsten, editor of Dagens Nyheter, is not the most dependable; he has been successively a Conservative, a Communist, a Social Democrat and a Liberal (Myrdal once referred to him as 'the friend of all our parties') and there have been recently signs of another shift."<sup>122</sup>

Tingsten became editor in chief of DN on the first of June 1946. The paper followed at that time a clear course of neutrality and Tingsten used arguments which he later should combat vigorously. On October 6 1946 he maintained that the establishment of a Western bloc "despite assurances about

its peaceful intentions should intensify the antagonism between Russia and its former allies."

The Bevin speech of January 22 1948 was for Tingsten the immediate cause for the Western Pact campaign. A paragraph in his contract compelled him to inform the paper's management about "specially important decisions". His first editorial of his Western Pact campaign was such a decision and that's why he informed Tor Bonnier, who, according to Tingsten's impression, in principle agreed with him.<sup>123</sup> But not everybody at DN was pleased with the new course. Already one day after Tingsten had started his campaign (It was the 25th of January, Bevin made his speech at the 22nd) Johannes Wickman, one of DN's political commentators, visited Undén because he did not want to take any responsibility for Tingsten's policy. He said that Tingsten on the 8th of January had "pleaded against the bloc idea and now already had turned." Tingsten was according to Wickman good at writing books and also intelligent but he was no politician.<sup>124</sup> But also the owners, the Bonniers, and the business manager, Helge Heilbron,

"felt that Tingsten was trying to move too fast for the Swedish public and their circulation figures seemed at times to confirm their fears."<sup>125</sup>

Tingsten's first editorial in his campaign for adherence to the West was called "Isolation or cooperation" (25.01.1948) and about 50 similar articles were to follow in the year to come. "Isolation" became Tingsten's word for Undén's concept of neutrality. The essence of his articles was that a SDU would be too weak to resist a Russian attack. That's why he considered a direct or indirect adherence to a Western alliance necessary. Ideologically Sweden was not and neither could be neutral. Undén was often attacked personally. Undén reacted immediately on Tingsten's attack of January 25. In his diary he noted "An attack in DN. I wrote a thing for MT against Tingsten."<sup>126</sup> That "thing" was an anonymous editorial with the title "The guardian of moral at Tegelbacken."<sup>127</sup>

"When the temperature in the political atmosphere rises Mr. Tingsten becomes always hot in his head (...). He literally spins around of eagerness. After two days of pondering and even before he got the extensive English accounts (of the Bevin speech) in his hands he is ready with the Swedish foreign policy. It should be changed resolutely."

In his editorials Undén did not go into the eventual advantages or disadvantages of an adherence to the West. What he put forward was that a

Scandinavian adherence did not promote peace and that Northern neutrality served all interests best. Sometimes Tingsten's attacks became very personal. The most remarkable one appeared in August 1948<sup>128</sup> and was called "Undén, a study in grey" in which Undén was pictured as "mediocrity decorated with blunders."

Most of the time Undén reacted quietly on such attacks. Tingsten's campaign did not stop with the realization of Nato but should go on for about one more year. Other influential papers that followed a pro West course were, the already mentioned GHT and Expressen, although the latter uttered itself less sharp than the former.<sup>129</sup> Undén also wrote some editorials against those opponents.<sup>130</sup>

Höger, (now: Moderaterna) the conservative party in the Riksdag (1944:15.0%, 1948: 12.3%) supported the official Swedish policy of neutrality. In an appeal to "the people of Sweden" the party pleaded for an "alliance free foreign policy" but emphasized also the importance of close Scandinavian cooperation, also in the field of defence with Denmark and Norway.<sup>131</sup> Like the liberal Folkpartiet Höger considered American weapon aid necessary<sup>132</sup> and partyleader Domö put much weight to the understanding for the Swedish position from the side of the Americans.<sup>133</sup> The prominent member Gunnar Heckscher wrote in *Svensk Tidskrift* that the representatives of Höger were "unanimous that an adherence to the Atlantic Pact ought to be out of the question" but he added: "anyway not at this time."<sup>134</sup>

Ivar Anderson, Högermember and editor of Svenska Dagbladet claims that many conservatives were doubtful -yes or no to the Atlantic Pact- and that he had been one of them.<sup>135</sup> He pleaded with Undén to send Swedish observers to the Nato negotiations if Sweden would be asked to do so.<sup>136</sup>

Sweden's leading conservative paper, Svenska Dagbladet, (SvD) supported the alliance free policy although the paper took a critical view of Undén.

"It was not easy for Otto Järte (editor of SvD) and me, who supported the official policy -alliancefree- to digest Undén's neutrality preachings, dry and dogmatic, we were fed up with it. 'Ideological neutrality' was a concept that SvD refused to acknowledge."

The motivation of SvD was that if Sweden should choose for the West Finland would be at the mercy of Russia.<sup>137</sup>



Bondeförbundet/Centerpartiet (Agrarian Party 1944: 13.6%; 1948: 12.4%) supported the government wholeheartedly. A fortnight after the speech of Bevin, partyleader Bramstorp declared that his party declined any ideas concerning a Swedish adherence to a Western bloc.<sup>138</sup> That attitude should not change and also in the minutes of the party management no dissonant voice in this matter can be found.<sup>139</sup> Contrary to Folkpartiet and Höger, which sympathized with the idea of western weapon aid, Bondeförbundet declined the idea because it was afraid, like the SDP, that the deliveries would be tied to certain conditions.<sup>140</sup> The position of Skånska Dagbladet did not differ from the standpoint of Bondeförbundet.<sup>141</sup>

Sverges Kommunistiska Parti (SKP, now VPK, 1944: 10.3%; 1948: 6.3%), the Swedish Communist Party, declined a SDU because it was a step back from neutrality. In 1945 the party wanted to get rid of neutrality and replace it with "democratic foreign policy". Sweden should unite with all nations and forces in the world that fought for "democracy, peace and freedom, against world capitalism, worldreaction and the imperialistic war mongers."<sup>142</sup> A SDU would come under direct US military command.<sup>143</sup> Sven Linderot declared at a meeting of the party management that he should demand the government to stick to the alliance free line. He did not demand neutrality and the party had never asked for it because it was not, except in "certain concrete situations defendable and feasible." In the opinion of Linderot alliance free was not the same as neutrality.

"For instance in the UN (..) one acts of course in favour of peace, supports the struggle for peace of the Soviet Union, supports the struggle against suppression of Greece's struggle for peace (..). That is what we mean with an alliance free policy."<sup>144</sup>

The SDU was regarded as part of the Western Alliance and accordingly hostile to the Soviet Union and therefore unacceptable. It was nothing less than a "Scandinavian American military alliance."<sup>145</sup> The party paper "Ny Dag", owned by the SKP, expressed similar views.<sup>146</sup>

Several Gallup polls show that a majority of the Swedish people was against an Atlantic Pact adherence although the Nato had more sympathizers among the people than among the Riksdag members. In April 1949 31% opted for Nato membership against 20% in June, 41% was against (June 47%) and 28%

had no opinion in April (June 33%). The reliability of the polls was questionable.<sup>147</sup>

Remarkable is that a third of the population at that time did not know the difference between democracy and dictatorship.<sup>148</sup>

One group in the Swedish society appeared to be a supporter of the Atlantic Pact: the military top. Matthews also has remarked that

"There is just one element in the country which is not blind to Sweden's folly: the armed forces."

Commander-in-chief Jung talked in front of Matthews about the "futility of neutrality" and about the probability of a western oriented SDU, once it was established.<sup>149</sup> Air force chief Nordenskiöld said that he and other colleagues cooperated with Tingsten "furnishing him such ammunition as they possessed to aid his campaign."

C. Ehrensvärd however, with Jung the most important Swedish officer, supported the official government line<sup>150</sup> but he was part of a minority.

*Ny Militär Tidskrift*, mouth-piece for Jung, published articles in which the function of neutrality was openly subjected to doubts.<sup>151</sup> A speech of Helge Jung in Lund (25.10.1949) that drew much attention became the target of an (anonymous) attack by Undén in the Social Democratic periodical "Tiden" where Undén criticized the commander-in-chief propagandizing a line deviating a from the official foreign policy. Months later, during a meeting of party leaders Undén said that the speech of Jung had "shaken the confidence of the Soviets in Sweden's foreign policy."<sup>152</sup>

Krister Wahlbäck doubted in one of his articles<sup>153</sup> on the SDU if those utterances of the military top could be taken seriously and if they should not be seen as efforts to influence the US opinion about the SDU in a more positive direction but there seems to be little or no reason for his doubt. Also after the failure in Oslo (Jung's speech in Lund is a good example) the military continued their pro Nato policy. Several sources, also Swedish, confirm the disposition of the leading military circles.

Ivar Anderson called general Nordenskiöld ("one of my best friends") an Atlantic Pact advocate, a fact that was confirmed by Tingsten. Undén warned Nordenskiöld from Paris that he should be more careful in his utterances. Among others Nordenskiöld, who was quoted in the Times of February 19 1949, had stated that if Sweden was attacked its task should be

"to hold out until help comes, but this is possible only if her armaments are technically completed through trusting cooperation with a Great Power. We must ensure that the door remains open for such cooperation with the West."<sup>154</sup>

A couple of months later he advised the English Air Attaché that it was only "a matter of time before the Swedish government will realise that they have no other course than to become members of the Pact (...)." <sup>155</sup>

Commander-in-chief Jung stated that he, as a soldier, was convinced that "Sweden could not do otherwise than associate herself with the West" and in front of the Dutch ambassador he made fun of neutrality which he considered "untenable". Erlander was warned that the general pursued a pro West policy.<sup>156</sup> From the very beginning Jung had been skeptical about a SDU because the advantages would be on the Danish and Norwegian side, while the risks for Sweden only would increase. Sweden was not able to supply its neighbours with materials because the Swedish forces needed everything themselves.<sup>157</sup>

The military top feared a shortage of materials and the resolution for that was an adherence to the West. Besides, they were convinced that they should not be able to resist an isolated Soviet attack on Sweden. The only thing they could do was to hold the enemy up until aid would come. Sweden was wholly dependent on supplies, both military and industrial, from the West, as general Swedlund explained in a speech.<sup>158</sup>

Because of the standpoints of the leading military the Americans and English might not have lost all hope regarding Swedish adherence to Nato. A hope that the official line could absolutely not provide. Farquhar also has made his contribution by reporting to Hankey that

"the three commanders-in-Chief of the Swedish armed forces are all equally alarmed lest a policy of isolation might jeopardize the re-arming and modernization of the Swedish forces."<sup>159</sup>

Confidentially Hankey informed Prebensen, the Norwegian ambassador, about Farquhar's telegram and wondered if there was no way at all to tie Sweden up to the West. The Norwegian diplomat remarked, as he had done several times before, in his report to Lange that at the Foreign Office seemed

"to prevail a strange optimism with regard to Sweden's position. I presume that reports, as the mentioned one, can be a contributing reason to this."<sup>160</sup>

Hankey's hope must only have grown stronger when he on the 19th of February 1949 received a copy from Farquhar of the document that the three Swedish Commanders-in-Chief on the 21st of January had sent to their government and in which they warned for an isolation of Sweden and pleaded for military cooperation with the West.

A high Swedish officer had played the document into the hands of a British military attaché in Stockholm. The Foreign Office assumed that the leak was planned by the Swedish army top. Severe security measures were taken to protect this source to prevent Stockholm from knowing about the contact between the highest British and Swedish military circles. A result of this leak was, according to Eriksen and Skodvin, that the Hankey plan was taken up again.<sup>161</sup>

But unfortunately for London and Washington it was the Erlander government, and not the military establishment, which determined the ultimate course of the foreign policy.

### 6.5 The Soviet Factor.

Did the Soviet Union play a role in the Swedish decision making and, if so, how big was that role? Already in June 1945, Rickard Sandler, ex foreign minister in the SAP/Bondeförbundet coalition of 1936-1939, remarked at a meeting of the SAP executives that creating a good relationship with the Soviets without doing concessions that would infringe the Swedish right of self-determination was Sweden's most serious problem.<sup>162</sup>

Undén considered good relations to Moscow important and was glad to hear from Rolf Sohlman, Swedish Ambassador in Moscow, that his foreign policy had impressed the Kremlin. Especially the fact that he was considered to be under Anglo-American pressure but nevertheless stood firm was received well. Undén was for the Soviets the personification of Sweden's foreign policy<sup>163</sup> and a few months later that view was once again confirmed by Sohlman: Undén was the guarantee for neutrality which was directly linked to him.<sup>164</sup>

Undén was proud of this and told Lange that he did not want to jeopardize his policy of neutrality which apparently had "made a breakthrough" in Moscow "through an inconsistent and ambiguous conduct."<sup>165</sup>

Undén was of course aware of the Soviet feelings about a Northern Defence Union. After the conclusion of peace between Finland and the Soviet

Union the Finnish government informed in Oslo and Stockholm how they felt about a defence pact.

Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov had immediately expressed his displeasure about the Finnish move face to face to the Swedish ambassador in Moscow and said that such pacts could not be neutral and that they were directed against the Soviet Union. Norway received a similar message.<sup>166</sup> Radio Moscow branded in 1947 the idea of a military alliance in Scandinavia as "an idea borrowed from the fascist organizers of the new European order." and after the Bevin speech the Russian ambassador had visited Undén and asked him if there were any changes in the foreign policy to be expected which was answered negatively by Undén. Bevin himself had learned the same from Undén in Paris where the Swedish foreign minister declared that a country's foreign policy in a high degree was determined by its geographical position.

If Sweden was a Pact member and if war broke out the Soviets should try immediately to occupy Sweden and "no other power could prevent the Soviets from coming first." Bevin made no comments.<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless it appeared not to be so easy to know what Moscow really had in mind. Sohlman stated that it was difficult to analyze the Soviet policy. Most likely Moscow wanted an isolated neutrality for all three countries and seemed have accepted the Swedish foreign policy as a "working hypothesis."

Norway was considered to be on the American side and Denmark somewhere in the middle. Sometimes it was doubted if Sweden could resist the Western pressure. A SDU was also experienced as a pact directed against Russia.<sup>168</sup>

At a later state it was said that a neutral SDU was "unnecessary and undesirable" but that it could, if need be, be tolerated. A Norwegian adherence to the Atlantic Pact on the other hand was considered "a serious matter."<sup>169</sup> A additional factor for the Russian decline of a (neutral) SDU could have been the appeal a neutral Northern bloc could exercise on Finland because it could inspire new anti-sovietism.<sup>170</sup>

It remains a strange phenomenon that the Soviets officially never discussed the matter. That was also the opinion of the Foreign Office in Stockholm:

"The remarkable things is (..) that until today the Russians, with not one word have referred to the question of Scandinavia and the Atlantic Pact neither in Stockholm nor in Moscow."

Ambassador Tjernychev had since the late summer of 1948 not been in Stockholm longer than a few weeks.<sup>171</sup>

The Russian press however did not keep silent and denounced the SDU and other forms of bloc building.<sup>172</sup> A possible reason for the Kremlin's low profile might have been the conviction that Undén would not change his course. His statements about the matter had always been clear and unambiguous. Undén feared both Western and Soviet influences because it was contrary to his strive for complete independence from both blocs. His "anti-americanism" was quite exceptional for those years and more or less *avant-la-lettre*. Engagement with the West would injure the peace time relations with Moscow seriously and the Russians would

"not unreasonably regard the matter as a Swedish readiness to establish bases within its territory for the use of future enemies of Russia. Russia would have a strong interest in working against such a Swedish policy."<sup>173</sup>

The question of the bases played an important role. That the Soviets did not want bases in Scandinavia is obvious. They would be too close to their borders. That was also realized in the West. Although the Americans pressed hard for bases in Greenland and Iceland they were much more reserved with regard to Denmark and Norway. They probably realized the Soviet sensitivity to this matter<sup>174</sup> but on the other hand one had to prevent that Moscow obtained bases in Scandinavia.<sup>175</sup>

From the beginning of the SDU talks the Anglo-Americans appeared to have been withholding as regards bases. Already in June 1948 Lange declared that the English and Americans had not asked for bases in Scandinavia<sup>176</sup> and that the only thing London and Washington were interested in was the denial of bases to the Soviets.<sup>177</sup> That declaration must have been a relief for Undén because in his view the Soviets would conceive bases as a threat and a provocation. Bases, in the vision of Undén, implied moreover the permanent presence of the West in Scandinavia so that the peninsula in fact would already be occupied before the war even had started.<sup>178</sup>

He remained skeptical about the assurances that the West was not interested in bases in Scandinavia because he foresaw that preparations would be made in peace time to enable the West to make use of Scandinavian territory as soon as a war broke out. There was to Undén little difference between "bases" and "positions".

"Bases are permanent stations while positions are points of support which can be used any time. The Soviet Union would be of the opinion that the USA had moved their positions close to its borders. That would have the effect of a provocation and bring about a Russian reaction."<sup>179</sup>

Undén had foreseen the Soviet attitude pretty well. Already before the failure was an official fact the Soviets asked the Norwegian government in a note (29.01.1949) if she had considered the establishment of Western bases in Norway.<sup>180</sup>

When Undén met Farquhar he pointed out that it was generally known how the Russians felt about "points of support" and that adherence to the Atlantic Pact should be interpreted as moving the American position further on to the Soviet borders. He had predicted a Russian reaction and he had been right. The Soviet reaction was the proof. Farquhar asked Undén what he thought about the Russian note to Oslo but Undén answered that he "had no special talent to interpret Russian notes."<sup>181</sup>

When the Soviet ambassador Rodinov visited Undén the latter confirmed to share the view of his visitor that the USA now had bases to its disposal in Norway and accordingly had moved on to the borders of the Soviet Union.<sup>182</sup>

## 6.6. The Finnish Factor.

The Finnish factor or "argument" has often been mentioned as one of the incentives for Sweden to stay neutral. The argument was hardly ever used by the members of the Swedish government and if they did it was merely for political reasons. It served as an alibi and could sometimes be useful in the "selling" of their foreign policy. Remarkable is that it were mainly non-socialists who put forward this argument. One of them was ambassador Boheman.

Boheman was suggested as the Foreign Minister to be in a liberal government if the social democrats should loose the elections of 1948. Privately he was pro Atlantic Pact but in function he always defended, as he was supposed to do, the policy of his government. In a conversation with Lovett and Benjamin Hulley, Chief Division of Northern European Affairs at the State Department, he said that

"Sweden felt great reluctance to enter any sort of military alliance, because to do so would lead the Soviets to take counter-measures in

the belief that airfields in Sweden were being made available to the Western powers for attack on Russia. These counter-measures would include prompt Russian occupation of Finland. (..) As a result Russia would be right on the Swedish border necessitating continuous mobilization (..) and this would turn Sweden into a liability rather than a potential asset as it now is. Sweden believes that a major reason for the mild Soviet policy towards Finland is based on the theory that a harsh policy would frighten Scandinavia into close military cooperation with the West, and Sweden does not want to make any move which would lead to a harsh policy in Finland."<sup>183</sup>

Boheman also tried to convince Hickerson and apparently with some success because the latter answered that the "argument about possible effects in Finland struck a very responsive cord with us."<sup>184</sup> Gunnar Häggblöf also (non socialist either) put the fate of the Finns forward as a motive for Sweden not to associate with the West and Bevin agreed with him that special consideration with regard to Finland was to be taken.<sup>185</sup>

Undén himself used the argument during his meeting with Marshall in Paris and although Marshall despised neutrality he had no answer to this argument<sup>186</sup> which by Undén was used only as an alibi because it never was a real motive for his foreign policy. But the argument might have had some impact and might also have contributed to the fact that it was not unanimous considered desirable to have Sweden as a (full) member in the Atlantic Pact. The National Security Council advised that, although it was dissatisfied with the Swedish attitude

"to refrain from forcing Sweden onto an attitude which would be unnecessarily provocative toward the Soviet Union."<sup>187</sup>

And George Kennan doubted if it was good policy to press neighbouring countries to the Soviets into a pact when their neutrality in certain circumstances could be more desirable. As an example he mentioned Sweden.<sup>188</sup> The British however considered a Western allied Scandinavia more important as the independent position of Finland.<sup>189</sup> Cumming was very skeptical about the argument and wondered if the Swedes believed the argument themselves.<sup>190</sup> Also the military top of Sweden preferred adherence to the West above an independent position of Finland.<sup>191</sup>

Sweden *did* take Finland into consideration, however not for the sake of Finland but for its own sake. Quite concrete: a Soviet occupation of Finland



would have been regretted in the first place because of the fact that the Soviets would have considerably moved on to the Swedish borders and only in the second place because of the Finnish fate.

Stockholm took also care to avoid utterances about Finland as much as possible.<sup>192</sup> The Finnish argument did simply not fit with the official Swedish foreign policy.<sup>193</sup> After the failure Undén declared once more, and he had done so many times before, that the essence of his policy was to protect the own country against foreign aggression and to prevent it from being used as a basis for war operations.<sup>194</sup> The conclusion as regards Finland can only be that Finland, being no part of the Swedish self-interest, was no motive for Undén's foreign policy.

Immediately after Stalin's proposal for a Treaty of Friendship Undén had declared that Finland's situation would not influence his foreign policy.<sup>195</sup> At another occasion he polemized with the Crown-Prince who considered the developments in Finland critical for the Swedish attitude towards the Western bloc.<sup>196</sup>

In one of his most important documents on foreign policy in the post war area Undén does not even mention Finland.<sup>197</sup> Boheman, who privately was of the opinion that a Soviet occupation of Finland could change the Swedish policy, was informed by Undén that he could make use of the Finnish argument but that it would not influence his policy in reality. Moreover Undén did not believe in a Russian occupation of Finland. In the eyes of Undén it was only a "hypothetical case." The Swedish Foreign Minister wondered if it had ever occurred to Boheman how the Soviets must feel if the "Baltic state of Sweden", which only by a small piece of water was separated from strategic vital Russian or Russian controlled territory, "would be integrated in the strategic system of the Western allies."<sup>198</sup>

Illuminating for Undén's moderation in the sensitive Finnish matter is the following:

"He (the South African ambassador) also wondered, if the pressure on Finland would not increase if Sweden would join a Western bloc. I (Undén) said that that was probable. The ambassador considered my points of view on the consequences for Finland very interesting" (though he himself had put forward them).<sup>199</sup>

The Finnish historian and diplomat Max Jakobson has argued, quite rightly, that the neutrality of Finland was as important for Sweden as the Swedish neutrality was for Finland. He wondered if Sweden had stayed neutral "to save Finland from a greater dependence of Moscow" but his conclusion was negative. After all, he argued, the Swedes kept their neutrality even when the Soviets invaded Finland in 1939. Jacobson concludes that both countries took advantage of each other's neutrality.<sup>200</sup>

We still do not know why the Soviets acted so moderate as they did. Did Moscow fear a Swedish adherence to the West when they should occupy Finland? That does not seem very likely because if that would have been the case Moscow would probably have contacted Stockholm and warned Sweden to consider taking such a step. But the SDU, as well as the Atlantic Pact, have never been subject for Russian *démarches*, notes or pressure and accordingly the conclusion must be that Finland was never used as a means of pressure by the Soviets on Sweden. Does that also mean that Moscow never considered to draw Finland further into its sphere of influence? It seems quite unlikely that considerations towards Sweden stopped Stalin's eventual intentions to include Finland completely in the Soviet bloc. It is more reasonable to assume that an occupation of Finland did not serve Stalin's purposes.

The Swedish embassies in Moscow and Helsinki reported that the Kremlin with the agreement first of all wanted to fill a gap in the Soviet defence system which was by then almost completed.<sup>201</sup> Indeed. Why should the pragmatic Stalin, in order to fill the gap, have occupied Finland if he also could settle the problem in a cheaper and more peaceful way: by a Treaty of Friendship.

For the definitive answer we will have to wait until *glasnost* also opens up the Soviet archives.<sup>202</sup>

## CHAPTER 7. BETWEEN OSLO AND WASHINGTON.

### 7.1 Lange pleads...SDU.

On the fifth of February, a few days after the definite failure in Oslo, a Norwegian delegation, headed by Lange arrived in Washington.<sup>1</sup> It had come to discuss the conditions for a Norwegian association with the Atlantic Pact. But in the first place it should, according to instructions of the Norwegian government, explore the possibilities of a SDU.

The Norwegian delegation did what it was ordered to do and stressed orally through Lange the importance of a joint Scandinavian solution. But the reservation was made that a SDU could only be established with the complete agreement of the United States and the UK and provided that such a SDU "could obtain the necessary war materials for its armaments on lenient terms." The Norwegian delegation wholeheartedly asserted that it preferred a united Scandinavian bloc but Lange added at the same time that Norway was willing to accept a break of Scandinavian solidarity "if necessary".<sup>2</sup> In fact this addendum "if necessary" made further negotiations superfluous: It was obvious to Washington that the Norwegians should choose the Atlantic Pact alternative if the US kept on rejecting furnishing weapon aid to a neutral SDU. There could be no misunderstanding about that.

Through the weapon deliveries the US held the key to Norway's association with Nato. Already a few days later, after hearings with the Pentagon and the future member countries of the Atlantic Pact, the State Department decided, as could be expected, to continue the old established policy. Dean Acheson informed president Truman on February 10 that:

"We would assure them that an enthusiastic welcome awaited them either as participants in the drafting of....a pact or if they did not wish to do this in acceding to it later on." <sup>3</sup>

The Swedes had suspected Lange's intentions from the beginning and Boheman in Washington reported in complete bewilderment to Stockholm that:

"For an old professional the Norwegian way of handling the entire Nordic question has been an awful experience. It has also created a situation where really nobody knows anything and where only the Russians can laugh, but that of course will really be 'und der Teufel lacht dazu'. First they let the Americans know through Morgenstierne (Norw. Ambassador) and official declarations that Norway is utterly

keen on joining an Atlantic Treaty, that was not difficult to foresee what it would mean and also what it might give. Then they pass through the Nordic phase with different views in Karlstad and Copenhagen, reject an alliance-free treaty in Oslo, immediately get an hang-over, send Lange himself to Washington, on the surface in order to inform themselves about the meaning of the Atlantic Treaty, in reality to say that what was rejected in Oslo would probably be preferable. Then they ask a number of questions about the Atlantic Pact that could not possibly be answered, and then they return home in order to think."<sup>4</sup>

Erlander also was perplexed that the Norwegians after the failure in Oslo started to plead in Washington exactly for what they had repudiated in their own capital a week before.<sup>5</sup> The question is of course: what lay behind this strategy? It is not likely that the Soviet notes<sup>6</sup> of January 29 and February 5 where Norway was warned, be it in moderate terms, against an association with the Atlantic Pact had influenced the Norwegian attitude. Moscow appeared to be particularly concerned about the possibility of Oslo putting bases at the disposal of the West. Norway, in its turn, had let known that it would not do so unless it was attacked or threatened with attack. Its probably more reasonable to assume that those notes only have strengthened the Norwegian belief that an adherence to the Atlantic Pact was the best solution for Norway's security.<sup>7</sup>

The Russian maneuver had made the Norwegian adherence a question of prestige, not only for Norway but also for those circles who considered a "no" of Norway and Denmark to the Pact as a success for the Soviets.<sup>8</sup> Bevin called a neutral SDU "a major victory for Soviet Russia".<sup>9</sup>

Beck-Friis offers a reasonable explanation for the Norwegian way of acting: He believed that Lange had travelled to Washington because he was afraid that the three Scandinavian ambassadors would explain the SDU failure in Washington:

"When at the Oslo meeting he first heard 'our friend' Morgenstjerne's, generally speaking, as pompous as void speech and explanation and thereafter Boheman's extremely effectful and out of the ordinary convincing part of discussion, Lange, I believe, became afraid that Boheman would be able to win the game and get the USA over to the Swedish line. I would be inclined to guess that Lange departed in the

first place for Washington to try to prevent that the State Department would hold out the prospect of any concessions to a neutral Northern union."

But the principal reason of Lange's plea for a SDU had according to Beck-Friis entirely been dictated by:

"regard to the opposition in his own party and by a wish to be able to assert before the party that he did everything to establish a Scandinavian union, but that, owing to the non-liability from the side of the USA to sell weapons, it had unfortunately proved to be impossible, and for that reason Norway had no other choice but joining the Atlantic Pact."<sup>10</sup>

This matches what the Norwegian ambassador in London, Prebensen, told Bevin at the beginning of February. Within Lange's own party, Arbeiderpartiet, there was a considerable group that had not made up its mind yet with regard to the Atlantic Pact. Lange had therefore, so Prebensen told to Bevin, in order to preserve the unity within the party, included an issue concerning the SDU.<sup>11</sup>

Also Sivert Nielsen, secretary at the Norwegian embassy in Washington, sketched in the presence of C.E. Rogers of the State Department the split within the Arbeiderpartiet and the impact that the SDU failure had made in Norway. John Hickerson however has maintained that Nielsen had come in the first place to inform if the Norway-in-the-Atlantic-Pact attitude of the State Department was still the same.<sup>12</sup>

Domestic politics have certainly played a role with regard to Lange's SDU appeal in Washington. Another question is as to how far the messenger and his plea can be taken seriously. Did Lange not play the devil's advocate? In a conversation with Häggblöf and the Danish ambassador in London, Reventlov, Lange asserted that he had been sincere in trying to win understanding for a SDU "with a view to obtaining a statement about weapon deliveries."<sup>13</sup> At his arrival in Washington he told Boheman something similar.<sup>14</sup> Later, Boheman expressed as his opinion that Lange's hurry to travel to Washington was inspired by his fear that the US support for Norway's association with the Western Pact was going to give way.<sup>15</sup>

Lange's statements are categorical and that is not surprising. If he had a certain, private, strategy in mind he could hardly be expected to tell the Swedes what he was really up to. As long as no convincing indications can be

found for Lange's sudden conversion to the Swedish line, an allyfree SDU, there remains place for doubts about the sincerity of his statements.

Lange did not, more or less, sabotage the instructions from his own government (or was it part of the government's strategy?) by stating at the very beginning of the talks that if the establishment of a SDU appeared to be impossible Norway was prepared to join the Western Security Pact? It is quite possible that he wanted to return home with an unambiguous American answer: weapon aid for a neutral SDU was absolutely out of the question. Accordingly there was only one way left, also the opposition could hardly have drawn another conclusion: adherence to the Atlantic Pact as the only acceptable alternative.<sup>16</sup>

In 1963 Lange was asked if he had not considered it natural that the Americans had refused weapon aid to a neutral SDU, (like they had been doing from the beginning) as long as they were not put before such an union as a *fait accompli*. Lange answered that the definite rejection of the SDU had been impossible for Norway as long as it had not got the final, negative answer from the West with regard to material aid. The question had to be asked so that Oslo could definitively make up its mind and that's why the Norwegian government had chosen to follow that way in Washington. When the talks in Washington were finished there appeared to be no further prerequisites for a SDU whatsoever.<sup>17</sup> It seems to back up the theory that Lange's trip was necessary in order to convince the antagonists that there was no solution for Norway's security but an Atlantic pact.

In the above referred conversation of Lange with Hägglöf and Reventlov in London Lange stated that he saw few possibilities for the establishment of a SDU and that it was now up to the Storting to decide. He himself was of the opinion that Norway "ought to hasten slowly" into the Atlantic Pact.<sup>18</sup> That harmonized perfectly with what Bevin had advised him: "do not rush matters but don't wait too long."<sup>19</sup>

Boheman in Washington explained Acheson the Swedish point of view but he did not plead for a re-opening of the SDU talks.<sup>20</sup> He got explicit orders from Stockholm not to do that. Sweden was afraid that it could be misunderstood if it should propose to start new talks about the SDU and the weapon question. Undén saw no reason for that neither because the view of Stock-

holm and Oslo with regard to the actual character of a defence union was still the same. New talks would resolve nothing and would consequently be senseless.<sup>21</sup>

The Danish ambassador, Kauffmann, however still fought for a neutral SDU and he succeeded in turning over the future Foreign minister, John Foster Dulles, at that time foreign expert for the Republican Party, to his point of view.<sup>22</sup> But he could not convince the State Department although they expressed themselves much more carefully and moderately than they had done in the past.<sup>23</sup> Kauffmann had been instructed by the Danish government to try to re-open the SDU negotiations<sup>24</sup> but he had no results. Thereupon the Danes decided to take a last chance in Stockholm and proposed a kind of amputated SDU: a Swedish-Danish Defense Union.

## **7.2 Swedish-Danish discussions on a Defence Union.**

Already in the autumn of 1948, when the SDU talks were still in full swing, the Danish Minister of Defence, Rasmus Hansen, had to Vougth expressed his hopes of a Swedish-Danish Defence Union in case the tripartite would fail. Denmark wanted a kind of de facto guarantee from Sweden.<sup>25</sup> Two weeks after the failure in Oslo Hans Hedtoft asked Erlander about the prospects of a Swedish-Danish Defence Union (SDDU).<sup>26</sup> Foreign minister Rasmussen also asked Undén on this matter during a meeting in Paris on February 16.<sup>27</sup>

It was the final Danish endeavour to escape the Atlantic Pact membership. Or was it a tactical maneuver in front of the Danish public and political opponents preceding the step which had become almost inevitable? Domestic political reasons played a certain role. Dardel reported to the Stockholm Foreign Office with reference to a meeting with Hedtoft that things was becoming delicate for his social democratic minority government. They did not want to cooperate with the communists, who were anti Nato, while among the opposition many pro Nato members could be found. If the opponents should form a pro Western Pact coalition in the Folketing there was a real danger that his social democratic party would become a minority. Hedtoft had also complained that the US absolutely refused to abandon their bases on Greenland, also when Denmark should decide not to choose Nato.<sup>28</sup> In other words: Hedtoft foresaw a political defeat if he did not play the game smartly.

There was never a ghost of a chance that a Swedish Danish Defence Union would come into being. Also Copenhagen was aware of that<sup>29</sup> although Hedtoft seemed, according to Erlander, quite optimistic about the outcome.<sup>30</sup> Neither Norway nor Sweden had made a secret of their opinion about Denmark with regard to military matters. Denmark was extremely difficult to defend and was in fact nothing more than a burden for the other two countries.<sup>31</sup> In fact both countries would have preferred even to leave Denmark out of a SDU but that was, for political and psychological reasons, considered impossible.<sup>32</sup>

Already before the initial SDU talks, Undén had advised Rasmussen about his negative feelings concerning Swedish military cooperation with Denmark.<sup>33</sup> Erlander noted in his diary that a SDDU was "of course" out of the question although he in his heart of hearts did not believe that the risks would increase because of an engagement with Denmark.<sup>34</sup>

Yngve Möller, the biographer of Undén, however refers to Erlander having asserted that the Soviets could conceive a SDDU as a disguised association with the West and that America and England could consider it a desperate Swedish attempt to prevent the association of Denmark with the Atlantic Pact.<sup>35</sup>

Undén assured the Danish Ambassador, Svenningsen, that he privately, "not as foreign minister", could imagine a more "extensive union: economy, politics, not only defence."<sup>36</sup>

Sverker Åström, concluded in a memorandum that the political and military risks for Sweden in case of a SDDU, compared with a SDU, would be the same but without any of the advantages that a SDU could have had, neither in time of war nor peace. Positive was, in times of peace, that Sweden could avoid the inescapable political isolation be it only to a very limited extent.

But what pleaded most against a SDDU was that Sweden, through Denmark, could be drawn into a war, which otherwise, "at least for a time", could have been avoided. Sweden would "unnecessarily" be involved in hostilities. As an advantage might be considered that an isolated Soviet attack on the SDDU countries could provoke a world wide conflict which in its turn meant a diminishing of the chances of such an attack.

The thought behind that consideration was that the West would not accept Soviet naval bases on the Danish Atlantic coast.<sup>37</sup> Also Helge Jung had warned, before the SDU talks even had finished, against cooperation with



Denmark because it would mean increasing risks for Sweden without corresponding advantages.<sup>38</sup> Denmark was impossible to defend.<sup>39</sup> From the Swedish military point of view it was deemed most desirable that Denmark, like Norway, should adhere to the Atlantic pact.<sup>40</sup> That would have been, in the eyes of the military establishment, the second best solution.<sup>41</sup>

Also the Foreign committee and the meeting of party leaders voted against a SDDU.<sup>42</sup> Undén informed Svenningsen on March 1 1949 about the negative decision. But Hedtoft was, through Erlander, already aware of the Swedish point of view.<sup>43</sup>

The SDDU had never been a serious alternative with regard to Swedish security because it did in no way serve the interests of the country. That fact, rather than considerations with feelings in Moscow, London and Washington, was the ultimate reason for the rejection of the SDDU proposal.

Folkpartiet leader Ohlin had voted against a SDDU but propagated at the same the desirability of military cooperation with Denmark and Norway. Erlander wondered if that had something to do with signs of early senility which also would explain a part of his "enormous tediousness".<sup>44</sup>

Neither the military did abandon the thought of cooperation with the Scandinavian members of the Nato<sup>45</sup> and general Svedlund spoke in May 1949 in front of Erlander still about "limited military cooperation with Norway".<sup>46</sup> The Prime Minister committed to his diary that he hoped that Defence Minister Vougt now finally could "collect the rests of his courage" to tell the generals that there could be no question of military collaboration with Norway.<sup>47</sup> Also American weapon aid to Sweden, by way of deliveries deliveries to Norway, were rejected.<sup>48</sup>

On March 3 1949 the Norwegian Storting voted in favour of Norway's participation in the Atlantic Pact. Denmark had now the choice between isolation and association to NATO. On March 4 it was decided that Rasmussen should travel to Washington to make preparations for Denmark's adherence to the Atlantic pact. He returned on the 17th of March and on the 24th and 25th of March the First and Second Chamber of the Danish Folketing voted for signing of the NATO pact.<sup>49</sup>

Iceland followed, as was expected, the example of the Danish homeland. On April 1949 Norway, Denmark and Iceland became, along with the Benelux, Canada, Italy, France, England, Portugal and the USA, the original members

of NATO. Both Denmark and Norway refused to have Allied bases, and accordingly no nuclear weapons, on their home territory in peace time.

### 7.3 English and American reactions on the failure.

"Relief" might be the most appropriate word to describe the reaction in London when it was certain that Norway would join the Western Pact. The danger of a neutral SDU, a "major disaster" according to Gladwynn Jebb<sup>50</sup>, Head of the Economic and Reconstruction Department of the foreign Office, had passed. The reaction of Hankey was amazingly hypocritical: he called the failure in front of Hägglöf a "real tragedy".

The Swedish ambassador expressed his surprise. Had England not got what it first and foremost wanted: The Atlantic Pact membership of Norway and Denmark. Hankey's answer to Hägglöf's remark was not very sincere either because he knew that it was unreal: he had preferred a SDU where Norway and Denmark at the same time were member of the NATO.

Personally he had never been eager about the membership of the Swedes. It should have situated the Nato too close to the Russian borders.<sup>51</sup> Hankey's "hypocrisy" may have been inspired by his, as "privately" expressed, desire that Sweden should give military support to its neighbours and enter some kind of military cooperation for the defence of Northern Europe, also after Norway and Denmark had joined the Atlantic Pact.<sup>52</sup>

That wish might also explain Hankey's remark of late February when he, during a visit to Hägglöf, declared that the Swedish-British relations were "very satisfactory". The Swedish ambassador answered that he was glad to hear that but that the Swedish point of view had not changed a bit. But Hankey appeared not to be eager to start a discussion about the subject all over again because it did serve no purpose anymore.<sup>53</sup> The situation repeated itself once more, when the Foreign Office, through Robin Hankey, now considered the situation to be "very satisfactory". And this time Hankey was in the mood to give an answer to Hägglöf's "why". In the autumn and winter the British authorities had been

"seriously worried in front of with the possibility that Sweden would bring Norway and Denmark respectively to a kind of neutral or alliance free group. When it had become evident that Denmark and Norway had gone their own way and adhered themselves to the Atlantic group, the situation in relation to Sweden had also cleared up."

Many "deeply rooted misunderstandings" had disappeared.<sup>54</sup> Also Orme Sargent and Gladwynn Jebb stated after the failure frankly that England had been afraid that Sweden could have drawn Norway and Denmark into a neutral SDU which would have meant a "real adversity for British protracted diplomacy". They admitted the importance of the Norwegian and Danish waters for the protection for Great Britain's own security. There had also been an emotionally tinged component with regard to neutrality which should not be underestimated. For many British it was objectionable that a Western nation placed itself outside "the group of fighting democracies" or the "general union of democracies".<sup>55</sup>

Also Bevin asserted that he had preferred a Western linked SDU -that was nothing new of course, he had said that many times before- but added now that Sweden, at least for the time being, especially with regard to Finland had certain grounds to stay outside the Atlantic Pact.<sup>56</sup>

Great Britain had won the tug-of-war with Sweden about Norway and appeared not to be rancorous, which she neither could have afford. Sweden, with its strong defence and sound economy and moreover her willingness to defend her territory, was indispensable for the defence of the Northern area. Besides it was the cheapest solution for the West. Sweden did not claim weapon aid, at a time when there was a great shortage of supplies, and paid with hard currency for the advanced defence material she ordered. The prophecy of Erlander and Undén that the West should be interested in a strong Sweden for their own sake<sup>57</sup> had come true.

The reaction of the Americans on the shattering of the SDU was less outspoken. The opinion of the US about the SDU had been negative and it still was so at the beginning of February although a slight turning of the tide seemed to be under way. The rejections of the State Department seemed less outspoken than before and appeared to be more cautious and restrained. The shift of policymakers at State,<sup>58</sup> was one of the reasons, another might have been that the State Department was confronted with a storm of critique in the American press for their obstinate endeavors to draw Scandinavia, especially Norway and Denmark, into a Western Alliance without, when it came to it, giving them any solid guarantees.<sup>59</sup>

In a letter (12.2.1949) to Undén ambassador Boheman expressed his opinion that he believed that the US preferred a Northern Alliance which was factually free but which could be shown to the world as associated, in one way or another, to the West. Then the Russians could not claim it as a victory for their politics.<sup>60</sup> Boheman reported that the Americans were confused about the behaviour of Lange and his delegation and Hickerson had told him that he could not get the hang of it. Hickerson admitted in front of Boheman also that the US were interested in a military strong Sweden that was able to defend itself.

Yet Boheman considered his talks with Hickerson not so "fruitful" because he "permanently recurs to his moral ideological motives".<sup>61</sup> At the end of February Boheman was convinced that a neutral SDU as for the Americans had been realizable. In a relatively short time he had been able to secure understanding for the Swedish SDU idea. Boheman was convinced that within the State Department the beginning of a reversal could be noticed and that if Lange really had wanted the SDU, he had been pleading for in Washington, it could have been realized.<sup>62</sup>

Also Geir Lundestad has pointed out to the changing attitudes at the State Department.<sup>63</sup> Had a SDU, in retrospect, belonged to the possibilities? We will never know but what we do know is that the Swedes and the Danes blamed the Norwegians, Lange and Hauge, for the failure while Norway on its turn depicted Sweden as the malefactor.

#### **7.4. The failure. The view of Sweden, Denmark and Norway.**

Norway was in the eyes of Sweden, and also of Denmark, responsible for the ultimate failure of the SDU.

Norway, through Lange, in its turn blamed Sweden. The central issue between Norway and Sweden was whether assistance from abroad, "an opening to the West", in case of war should be arranged in advance or not. In Norway there has been a debate whether Lange wanted a Western linked SDU or preferred the pure Atlantic Pact membership.<sup>64</sup> By now, or at least for the time being, it has been clearly established that Lange would have favoured a SDU with an opening to the West.<sup>65</sup>

So in fact both countries wanted a SDU. But both wanted a SDU which was cut according to their own specific needs, which in practice appeared to be incompatible.

Has Sweden at any time been prepared to abandon its strict policy of neutrality during the negotiations? In the Swedish sources that I consulted I have found no indications that Undén Erlander, or the government in Stockholm in general, ever have played with the thought to reconsider their foreign policy, just as little as Lange has been willing to abandon their, in advance arranged, opening to the West. The (mis)understanding in Stockholm of the Norwegian point of view is quite astonishing, especially if we see it in the light of what is put forward in the "Lange debate".<sup>66</sup>

The perceptions of Stockholm seem for a great part to have been generated by her own foreign service but at the same time it must be noticed that Undén and Erlander shared those ideas. Johann Beck-Friis considered Prime Minister Gerhardsen an irresolute man and in a letter to Undén he wrote that Gerhardsen was not the strong leader that the country in this troublesome times needed. He always went along with his Swedish and Danish colleagues, as long as he was with them, but once back in Oslo he adopted, influenced by Lange, another point of view.<sup>67</sup>

Also Erlander put more confidence in Gerhardsen's ideas than in his deeds and confirms the idea of Beck-Friis about Gerhardsen as a irresolute man.<sup>68</sup>

Undén in his turn considered Gerhardsen to be on the Swedish line but he too pictured him as a man who could not make decisions.<sup>69</sup> The Norwegian ambassador Bergersen has indicated to Undén that there were controversies between Gerhardsen and Lange concerning the SDU.<sup>70</sup>

With regard to Lange Beck-Friis was of the opinion that never before such an important decision had been forced through by only one man. He was convinced that Lange had aimed at the Atlantic Pact membership from the beginning. If he sometimes pleaded for a SDU, he did so only to demonstrate to the opposition in his own social democratic party that he tried very hard to reach a Scandinavian solution, but that it was impossible. Beck-Friis was almost convinced that Lange had exploited the rumours about an impending Russian move in the spring of 1948, for his own ends: to associate Norway to the West.<sup>71</sup> The tone and words in Beck-Friis' letter are far from objective but there is no doubt that he was convinced that Lange was the man who aligned Norway purposefully to the NATO.

In his letter to Undén he remarked that Lange was not eager about a Danish connection to NATO because he wanted the honour of being one of the 7

original NATO members for himself and did not want to share it with any other Scandinavian country.

"His personal ambition is great and the publicity he got in the world press in the past months as 'the courageous leader' for the 'brave Norway' etc. has probably given him very much satisfaction, though he certainly would have preferred being celebrated as the leader of Scandinavia as well: Lange has intervened quietly and purposefully, without getting carried away and without hesitation, as soon as there were risks for closer Scandinavian cooperation. (...) He has played his cards extremely well and has been eager to avoid making appearances of leading the public opinion, which in fact he has done. In his public speeches he has always gone step by step with his ear against the ground, listening if the public opinion followed."<sup>72</sup>

Beck-Friis considered Lange an excellent speaker:

"During his last speech in the Storting in favour of connection to the Atlantic Pact he appeared equally convincing as one year ago (20.1.-1948) when he energetically defended the entirely contrary policy (...)."<sup>73</sup>

Already in the beginning of September 1948 Beck-Friis had warned Undén that he distrusted Lange's intention: He took part in the SDU talks because he was convinced that they would lead nowhere, but he was forced to participate because of the heavy criticism he would otherwise have been subject to from the neutral SDU minded parliamentary members of his own party.<sup>74</sup> According to Beck-Friis Oslo continued the SDU negotiations for the sake of appearances only, hoping thereby that the outside would get the impression that the Swedish unflexibility was responsible for the failure.<sup>75</sup>

Also Undén himself was convinced that Lange had worked for pure Nato membership from the beginning<sup>76</sup> and during the Karlstad Meeting he committed to his diary:

"How do the Norwegians consider the results? Have they any thoughts about giving up association with the Atlantic Pact? I hardly think so. From the beginning they have thought about the possibility of drawing Sweden in the wake. When they noticed that they not succeeded they were finished with the Scandinavian union. Yet they wanted to know just how far Sweden would go. They probably never thought that we would be willing to go along with a defence union. If this is the case,

at least as far as the government is concerned they think it necessary to follow the line a bit further. Probably they expect that everything will break down on USA's stance to the war material question."<sup>77</sup>

In a conversation with the Danish Ambassador in Stockholm Undén could do nothing but agree when the former remarked that Lange consciously had worked for Atlantic Pact membership.<sup>78</sup>

Erlander was also of that opinion and alleged that Lange had never taken the Swedish proposal seriously and when in Copenhagen the chances for a SDU definitively were gone he called it "Lange's day of triumph".<sup>79</sup>

That Sweden nevertheless attended the last SDU meeting in Oslo (29-30 January) had not been for political and psychological reasons only but also "to give the SDU a decent funeral".<sup>80</sup> Erlander has called the failure his "first big political defeat".<sup>81</sup> In the opinion of Erlander Lange had won and Erlander wondered if Lange therefore could be called a "distinguished politician". The Prime Minister answered his own question affirmatively but added bitterly that

"may be it is not so difficult to deceive unsuspecting friends who do not even dream to play the game with marked cards and that one of the partners does not follow the rules of the game."<sup>82</sup>

Neither Erik Boheman had any confidence in the Norwegian intentions: Norway had already made its decision and Boheman advised Stockholm "to grin and bear it".<sup>83</sup> After the definite failure in Oslo, Boheman's distrust had turned into complete bewilderment when Lange went to Washington to plead for a SDU.<sup>84</sup> In Stockholm the picture of Lange as the evil genius behind the failure was finally confirmed by Gunnar Häggglöf in London who had felt that Norway had wanted to join Nato all the time.<sup>85</sup>

The pro West role of Hauge and accordingly his part in the failure was also taken up discussion. Beck-Friis described him principally as an ardent supporter of Lange. Hauge is not pictured in that way in the diaries of Undén although also Undén was convinced that Jens Hauge was an outspoken pro West.<sup>86</sup> Different again is the approach of Erlander who puts much more weight on Hauge who, according to Erlander had dominated the Norwegian delegation at the important Karlstad conference.<sup>87</sup> But he held both responsible:

"The responsibility that Lange and Hauge take upon themselves ought to be feeling horrible but seems not to trouble them."<sup>88</sup>

The Swedish government considered the Norwegians responsible for the failure of the SDU because of their unwillingness to join a non aligned defence union. From the Swedish point of view it did not matter at all if Lange wanted a SDU with "an opening to the West" or pure NATO membership. Both options were incompatible with the Swedish policy of non-alignment. The Swedes explained the failure partly by referring to the deep mistrust that the Norwegians felt with regard to Sweden and which had arisen during the period of the former Personal Union, when the Norwegians were under the Swedish crown.<sup>89</sup> The king told Undén about the different Norwegian mentality:

"You can understand that it was difficult in former days when one came to Norway as Crown-Prince. They thought different from us. It was like changing skin. But one was of course forced to do that in that capacity."<sup>90</sup>

The deep distrust that had arisen during the years of the former Personal Union must not be overstressed but neither must it be overlooked. Erlander probably referred to that period when he wrote that

"much of the Norwegian point of view is emotionally determined by the repugnance of the Norwegians to accept advice and even less instructions from Sweden."<sup>91</sup>

London and Washington might also have made use of this Norwegian sensitivity.<sup>92</sup> Boheman, looking back at the negotiations, expressed as his view that:

"The main reason for the failure is to be found in Norwegian politics. From the Norwegian side they have quite simply never wanted a Northern cooperation that infringed in the least Norway's possibilities to be a member in a bigger security organization. (..) The perspective of a Northern military alliance, where Sweden because of his military superiority would be going to play the dominating role, has appeared particularly frightening."<sup>93</sup>

Where Norwegian research has established that Oslo preferred a Western associated SDU, the opinion of the Swedish policymakers was that Norway consciously and purposefully had worked for a Norwegian adherence to Nato.



The Swedish *experience* was that their SDU concept had failed because Norway *doomed* their proposals to fail.

Also the "April syndrome" has played a role but it seems that the influence of the Second World War (one cannot speak of a syndrome with regard to Sweden) on the Swedes has been at least as big as it was on Norway. The April syndrome refers to the shattering of the Danish and Norwegian neutrality by the Germans on the 9th of April 1940. The event caused considerable doubts about the desirability of a recontinuation of the old policy and a repetition of April 1940 was feared, be it this time with the Soviet Union as aggressor. Krister Wahlbäck has paid much attention to what he calls the 9th of April syndrome.<sup>94</sup>

In what might be his most important declaration on post war foreign policy Undén puts forward that:

"the experience of the two past world wars cannot simply be denied as being meaningless. On the contrary, this experience is of great weight."<sup>95</sup>

Both wars had strengthened the Swedish credo that involvement in war could be avoided. At least for a time. In the light of the last World War, it is not surprising that Norway, with *her* experience, threw herself into the arms of the West on which tacit support she had relied ever since the Crimean War in the nineteenth century.

Denmark however, although having been occupied by the Nazi's, preferred the Swedish option. The reasons for that were of a domestic political, psychological, historical and sentimental nature.<sup>96</sup> According to Erlander, the view that Denmark, or at least Hedtoft, should have preferred a non-aligned SDU is not correct. Erlander believed that the Danish Prime Minister was one of the actors in the SDU game who was most pro West although he hid that by acting as the intermediary between East and West.<sup>97</sup> Hedtoft should also have said that he was

"with the Swedes against the Norwegians, when I am with the Swedes, and with the Norwegians against the Swedes, when I am with the Norwegians."

Erlander was upset and noticed in his diary: "Hell!" Hedtoft played "double".<sup>98</sup> Hedtoft's role is not confirmed by what is said here above about his activities during the SDU negotiations and neither by Undén in his diaries and

memoranda; rather the opposite.<sup>99</sup> There are however other sources which confirm that Hedtoft assured the English and American administration that he should try to get the Swedes over to a "Western" SDU.

But it is far from sure that Hedtoft meant what he said. It might as well have been a part of his tactics to keep London and Washington calm so that the negotiations could proceed undisturbed.<sup>100</sup>

It has been established by Nikolaj Petersen that Denmark preferred the Swedish option. The second choice was a Western oriented SDU while the Atlantic Pact membership was the least attractive solution.<sup>101</sup> Also Petersen has pointed out that the central role of Hans Hedtoft is still not totally clear.<sup>102</sup> Hedtoft himself advised ambassador Dardel that he held Norway responsible for the failure:

"The Norwegian position was forced through by Lange who for the greater part of his life has lived abroad, and by minister of defence Hauge, who was still influenced by the sufferings he had been exposed to during his stay in concentration camps."<sup>103</sup>

Dardel, or rather Hedtoft, was wrong about the facts both concerning Lange and Hauge but it illustrates how incorrect information can contribute to a false picture of the actual situation.

And finally: Who was to blame according to Norway? Oslo got its "opening to the West" be it not in the way it had preferred: via an aligned SDU. So actually the leading policymakers in Oslo had not much reason for blaming the others for the failure. Erlander has maintained that Lange "internally has pushed the argument" that the Swedes the whole time had realized that weapon deliveries to a non-aligned SDU were not to be expected and that accordingly the "Swedish offer therefore was not seriously meant".<sup>104</sup>

Lange might have made his utterance for internal use in order to defend his own choice for the Atlantic Pact. But he cannot be blamed for not having warned the Swedes that if they should stick to their unconditional neutrality there could not be any question of a SDU.<sup>105</sup> The Swedish SDU proposal was absolutely seriously meant. The non-aid question was not, in any case not the weight it was to get, to be foreseen at the time of proposal.

But the final conclusion must be that the SDU negotiations were bound to fail from the beginning because of the opposite points of view (alignment in some form versus absolute non-alignment) in respectively Oslo and Stockholm.

Copenhagen played no role of any significance. Neither Oslo nor Stockholm should abandon their initial views and for that reason the viability of the SDU proposal was next to zero.

The story of the SDU negotiations and the ultimate failure was also the story of distorted views, distrust, personal resentment, affections and miscalculations.<sup>106</sup> Together with historical dominants, national self interest, strategic considerations, British and American pressure, threats of non-aid and Cold War outlooks they provide the ingredients for the story why Sweden stayed neutral whereas Norway and Denmark sought their security in the West.

## CHAPTER 8. THE AMERICAN EMBARGO POLICY AND SWEDISH NEUTRALITY.

### 8.1 History and motives of the embargo policy.<sup>1</sup>

The first legal steps on the road to the Embargo policy were taken in Washington at the turn of the year 1947-1948. The Marshall Aid, which was announced in June 1947, may be considered as the first phase in this Economic warfare against the Soviet Union that gradually should become known as Embargo Policy. From the end of 1947 onwards licenses from the US Department of Commerce became necessary for all US exports to Eastern Europe. Commodities which were considered to have strategic value could no longer be shipped (or re-exported by third countries) to the Soviet Union or its satellites.

What are "strategic" goods? A simple definition does not exist. With regard to products as tanks, armoured cars, bombers, tanks, ammunition and explosives there is little confusion but what about steel, rubber or simply food? Steel can be used for peaceful purposes but also for the manufacture of for instance air craft carriers, rubber is used for tires of military vehicles and plane but it can also be utilized for wheel chairs. Even food can be of strategic value. Soldiers keep themselves in good fighting condition by using proper food. So it is obvious that almost any commodity can be labelled as "strategic".

Two World Wars have also taught us the lesson that almost any commodity can be important or at least of some use for the war potential of the adversary.<sup>2</sup> The American export licensing regulations of December 31, 1947 and January 15, 1948 became effective on the first of March 1948. The directives had been scheduled indeed for that date although they later often have been explained as a reaction on the communist takeover in Prague.<sup>3</sup> The principle motive behind the embargo policy was to influence the East - West trade which on its turn must be seen in the light of the ever growing Cold War sentiments. Communism had to be contained and the embargo policy functioned as a rational means of upholding the American power supremacy vis à vis Russia. From the beginning it has been evident that a unilateral US embargo would be ineffective and that the help and support of the Western Europeans was required. But Western Europe displayed little enthusiasm for the new US policy. The reason for that was simple: Their trade with Eastern

Europe was too important. Too, the Western Europeans had, much more than the US, large vested interests in Eastern Europe which they might risk to loose in case of an embargo. It was obvious that Europe had to be forced into cooperation but that did not happen to offer unsurmountable difficulties for the US.

The Marshall Aid, which the Europeans deemed indispensable for their economic recovery, was linked directly to the embargo policy. Cooperate or perish. Cooperate in the embargo policy or otherwise the Marshall Aid will be stopped (section 117 (d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948). Export control became a condition for economic aid.

The European unwillingness to participate did not mean that they were less interested in the containment of communism than the US. The fear in Western Europe for the extension of communism was great, because they would be the first victims of an eventual Soviet expansion, but it was seriously doubted if an embargo policy was the proper solution. Western Europe argued that the policy could not be implemented in a realistic way and that it neither would hurt the East so much that it would be willing to change its policy. Besides: it would hurt Western Europe as much as Eastern Europe and probably even more. And finally: the foreign trade of Moscow was of such relative importance that it could not be expected to influence Stalin's decisionmaking. The countries in the Soviet sphere were indeed much more depended on their foreign trade than Moscow but it was also realized that their influence in the Kremlin was practically nihil.

## **8.2. The OEEC and CoCom.**

The nations that profited from the Marshall Aid were organized in the Organization for European Economic Organization (OEEC) in which also Switzerland and Sweden were represented although the Swiss did not accept any economic assistance at all. The aid that Sweden received was more symbolic than substantial.<sup>4</sup>

In the summer of 1948 the US started negotiations with the OEEC countries which finally should result in the decision to establish an organization which should become known as the CG-CoCom (Consultative Group-Coordinating Committee), shortly referred to as CoCom. The CoCom, installed in Paris on November 22, 1949 coordinated the embargo policy which the

Europeans after hard bargaining with the US had agreed upon. Embargo lists were made which became effective on January 1, 1950. There were three different types of lists:

- a.) commodities which under no circumstances were allowed to be exported to communist countries
- b.) commodities which were allowed to be exported in limited quantities and
- c.) commodities which should be kept under surveillance.

The CoCom operated in complete secrecy, even the name of the organization was until 1953 *classified*, and it had neither a legal charter nor enforcement powers. Sweden, represented by Dag Hammarskjöld, and also Switzerland, had participated in the talks which finally had led to CoCom but they did not join the organization because both countries could not compromise their neutral status by taking part in economic warfare. It was of course important for the US that both Sweden and Switzerland were in some way or another connected to the CoCom. The danger that the other Europeans, which had been forced to cooperate, should use those two industrialized states as a transit station, was by no means inconceivable.

That the CoCom operated in complete secrecy had also the advantage, as Gunnar Adler-Karlsson has observed, that domestic debates in the member countries were avoided and that parliamentary approval was not needed.<sup>5</sup> Too it offered neutrals like Sweden the opportunity to conclude a gentlemen's agreement with the US, in exchange for certain favours.<sup>6</sup> The US had some effective means of pressure to its disposal in order to compel the reluctant neutrals into cooperation: Sanctions on the national economies, sanctions on private undertakings and direct negotiations with the pertinent governments and business interests. Denial of essential raw materials, machinery and export licenses had as a matter of fact become an approved weapon since the realization of the Ryssavtalet.

Also the non-aid question during the SDU negotiations must be seen in the light of that policy of denial. With regard to Sweden the implementation of the policy of denial and pressure on business circles had began long before anybody had ever heard of the embargo policy.<sup>7</sup>

We will first try to answer the question in how far the administration in Stockholm was willing to participate in the embargo policy and then turn to

the problem in how far the private Swedish enterprises were used by Washington in order to reach the best possible result for their policy.

### 8.3 Embargo policy and neutrality in practice.

*Discretion* was the catchword of the Swedish government with regard to the embargo policy. Stockholm received the US embargo lists as "information material" (from January 1949 onwards) but despite all discretion and secrecy the Soviet Union appeared soon to be aware of the American efforts to involve Sweden in their embargo policy. The matter was reported by the Soviet news agency *Tass*, as early as March 1949.

After the formation of CoCom a decree (May 1950) on general exports control was issued in Sweden which gave the government discretionary licensing powers. The Americans appeared to have been particularly concerned with deliveries of special steel, iron ore and roller and ball bearings.<sup>8</sup> But already since November 1949 a decree had been in effect which determined that a list of munitions and certain other war materials could be exported only under special licenses. Also machinery and tools, necessary for the production of all the other items on the embargolists were covered by this decree.<sup>9</sup>

The negotiations of the US with Sweden had been difficult because of the importance of its trade with Eastern Europe, the limited Marshall Aid and last but not least because of the Swedish policy of neutrality.<sup>10</sup> The pressure on private companies had already begun with the implementation of the Ryssavtalet, a fact that initially was denied by the US authorities<sup>11</sup>, but that nevertheless had become more and more open with the elapse of time. Significant in that respect is the visit that Cumming and the ECA representative in Sweden, Haskell, had paid to Hans Beck-Friis at the Utrikesdepartementet in October 1948. Haskell appeared to be rather unhappy in his role of messenger of the embargo restrictions which he considered had little to do with his function of ECA representative.<sup>12</sup> Haskell told Hans Beck-Friis that the US had started confidential discussions with the OEEC countries about the export of war materials to the Soviet Union "and other countries behind the iron curtain". He reminded of the section 117 {d} of the Foreign Assistance Act. In that connection he refused to use the word "sanctions" but preferred instead to talk about "voluntary cooperation" in the interest of all.

The Marshall Aid would be taken up in Congress, next spring, and it was therefore deemed necessary "to show people" how things so far had gone on.

Time after time Haskell emphasized that the US in principle had nothing against trade with the East, on the contrary, they even wanted it to be "fostered" but that for reasons of security certain commodities could not allowed to be shipped. Such was especially the case with goods which from a military point of view were "essentially dangerous".

Haskell admitted that it was complicated to establish which commodities fell under that definition but gave as an example roller and ball bearings which might for about 5% be characterized as dangerous from a military point of view. To make things easier and also for the sake of avoiding mistakes the ECA representative handed over the official American warmaterial list in five numbered copies (3-7). The list did not look unfamiliar to Hans Beck-Friis because it "resembled our own". The still embarrassed Haskell stressed in an almost apologizing way that the list was not to be seen as a kind of an "economic warfare list" but merely as a basis for further American-Swedish discussions.<sup>13</sup>

Absolute secrecy with regard to conversations between the US and Sweden could be guaranteed. Even the pertinent Congress committee was not to be informed. It should be restricted to the party leaders. The close cooperation in foreign affairs between president Truman and senator Vandenberg was the guarantee that things would not be made public.<sup>14</sup>

The ECA representative in Switzerland used apparently other methods in order to secure the cooperation of Bern. The Swiss ambassador informed Undén that his country was asked to accept the war materials list as the basis for their trade with the East. Of course in all discretion. The Swiss were also told that Sweden had decided to accept the American request. But the Swiss government had not believed a word of that allegation and that's why ambassador Vallotton had come to see Undén who could assure him that Sweden had not yet answered the American request but that it was likely going to be negative. According to Undén the US had tried the same hoax with him by saying that Oslo was willing to accept the war material list which Undén considered to be hardly credible.<sup>15</sup>

During an informal discussion in Brussels where France, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden were present the US lists were



taken up for discussion. It appeared that Washington had exercised pressure on France and the United Kingdom to accept the lists.

The other countries had until that moment not been subject to pressure. All agreed that the lists should be treated as a political question which in fact had nothing to do with the Marshall Aid to which they were connected. It was agreed that the lists would be handled as "information" and that Washington would be told that the lists would be taken into consideration as much as possible. An individual approach of the problem was preferred above a general European strategy. "Especially" Hammarskjöld, who represented Sweden, held that view.<sup>16</sup>

Haskell did not confine his visits to his call of October 13 1948 when he, somewhat embarrassed, visited the Utrikesdepartementet in the company of Cumming. He returned on December 13, this time alone, and on January 7 1949 he was back again with Matthews. At that occasion he left a secret list with commodities of which the export to "the other side of the iron curtain" was undesirable. Finland was called "a special case" and the same was true for Yugoslavia. On January 28 1949 Matthews was, with reference to Section 117 {d}, orally informed that goods, which import in Sweden was financed through the Marshall Aid, were bound to stay in Sweden and were not allowed to be re-exported. Matthews was also promised that special control would be exercised.<sup>17</sup>

The (oral) American accounts had also, "and principally", a further purpose: to have the Swedish government accept the new lists which exceeded the old warmaterial conception. The Americans doubted now if they should link these lists directly to the Marshall Aid: the first demarches had been made jointly by ECA representative Haskell and members of the US embassy while the third demarche was made Matthews alone. The wording had not been very harsh either: what Washington wanted was voluntary cooperation for the sake of both the US and Sweden and it was not their intention to disrupt the trade with the East. But from the security point of view special attention had to be paid to goods which could serve for the building up of the Eastern war potential.

The difficult point was that nowadays almost any commodity can be used in modern warfare. What the US wanted in the first place was a basis for "friendly discussions" with Sweden.<sup>18</sup> Originally the US had provided the Swedes with two lists with commodities: the first one being public and

containing war materials which were prohibited to export and which was tantamount to the Swedish list, the second list being secret and not meant for the public.

The secret list had been replaced with the 1 A list, pure strategic material which was qualified as especially dangerous, and the 1 B list which contained material that could be useful in a potential military sense. On January 28 1949 Matthews received the oral statement that the Swedish government had taken the information about the commodity lists *ad notam* and that her control experts and authorities would study it. It was also pointed out that Sweden, with regard to war materials, already had promulgated restrictions and export prohibitions and that most commodities were already subject to a licensing system. For the protection however of Sweden's own security interests it might appear to be requisite to extend the realm of commodities which were subject to export restrictions. The new American lists could in that respect be a guide for Swedish resolutions.<sup>19</sup>

On March 20 1949, Cumming and Haskell, informed Stockholm that the question of the end-use of some commodities which Sweden imported from the USA in due time would be taken up again for discussion.

In February 1949 the UK and France had decided to follow a common line with regard to the embargo policy and had produced a list of their own which was a modified version of the American one. Also Sweden was now provided with this list and requested in how far they were willing to prevent the re-export of the commodities on the Anglo-French list for which an export licence to Sweden was required. Sweden let orally know that they were quite willing to cooperate.<sup>20</sup> In October 1949 the Swedish government agreed to control both the export of 1 A and 1 B items to the Soviet areas.<sup>21</sup>

In December both State Department and ECA representatives returned to the Swedish position with regard to the East-West trade. It appeared that the US officials had a clear picture of the official Swedish attitude but Dag Hammarskjöld felt that they wanted more: control of the by Sweden supplied information by means of a direct interview. Hammarskjöld repeated what he had said before: there could be no talk of an export policy that was established on discriminating principles but Sweden was quite willing, also for the sake of her own security, to keep the export of war material under control.

In principle that was already done "by freezing traditional export patterns", among others in the fields which were covered by the actual lists. That implied that strategic and potential strategic material was exported only to countries which had been "traditional customers" of Swedish war material. The trade could be controlled through the system of export licensing. A special officer at the Trade Commission controlled the increase in exports of sensitive commodities which "involved a departure from traditional patterns". In case of suspicion the matter was raised to "cabinet levels for consideration".

What Hammarskjöld in fact said was that there existed no official, legal export policy with regard to sensitive commodities but that the government at any moment, and at the highest level, could intervene if she deemed it desirable. Hammarskjöld's answer was considered "very positive" and Hammarskjöld's impression was that Washington relied on the good intentions of the Swedes as well as on the Swedish governmental capacities and that Sweden anyway had "the benefit of the doubt".<sup>22</sup> Hammarskjöld was also told that the attitude of Sweden was felt to be much more satisfying than that of many other countries who claimed to follow the US political line. However one important thing was missing: a statistical elucidation of the factual situation although it was admitted that Sweden was on the proper way with the material that the Utrikesdepartementet transferred to Washington. It only could have been some more. But the bare fact that it occurred was at least an indication that both countries would be able to reach a mutual satisfying settlement in the embargo policy. Because of the here painted situation Hammarskjöld did not expect US much criticism on the Swedish decision not to join the CoCom in Paris. But he warned that Sweden must avoid to expose herself to suspicion of "bad faith" because:

"The opinion that great caution in the field in question is the price for a maintenance of the complete independence, that we until now have managed to maintain, seems (...) confirmed".<sup>23</sup>

The English Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, Sir William Strang, was informed about the definite Swedish standpoint: Stockholm was not going to join the CoCom and the US had shown complete understanding for the way how Sweden, in practice, handled its "part in question of the security problem". Strang's answer was short: "Congratulations".<sup>24</sup>

Ample nine months later, on September 25 1950, the British *chargé d'affaires*, Lambert, informed himself about whether Sweden was willing to follow the "Lists of Paris", i.e. the CoCom. Lambert himself foresaw that that was not possible and begged that's why to be informed if Sweden in one way or another could cooperate in order "to bring the matter a step further". Hammarskjöld answered that the Swedish policy made it impossible indeed to follow officially the "Lists of Paris" but that Stockholm was much interested in receiving information "concerning what other countries considered to be material that was important for warfare".<sup>25</sup>

With regard to the East-West trade Sweden maintained close contact with Switzerland. Dag Hammarskjöld learned from his Swiss colleague Zehnder that Bern also received "information material". In other words: Also the Swiss got the common American, English and French lists. With regard to the common lists the Swiss had declined all measures but they had followed the Swedish example and used them as a basis for a correction of their own lists with commodities which were subject to blocking measures.

The USA had exercised grave pressure on the Swiss government because of the very extensive transit trade via the free port of Basle. It had been established that great quantities of strategic material, originating from the NATO pact nations, via Switzerland reached the communist countries. All these goods had a re-exportdestination which at first sight looked innocent but which after closer examination appeared to be false. Zehnder presumed that there were big organizations behind these affairs.<sup>26</sup> Similar affairs were known in Sweden.<sup>27</sup> The US had also tried to force Switzerland to give accurate information about their trade with the East but the Swiss had, as contrary to the Swedes, rejected the US demands. Zehnder considered that the US control on Swiss activities had gone much too far and therefore been subject for Swiss protests in Washington. The Americans, Zehnder complained, had gone so far that they had confiscated goods which had been destined for Austria. The confiscation was of course regarded as "inadmissible" by the Swiss government.

It had also come to the fore that large quantities of American raw materials for Switzerland did not longer reach their destination. Several shipments had been blocked which, so believed the Swiss, was due to their refusal to accept the CoCom lists as well as rules for their extensive transit

trade. Bern did not believe that their denial to give information about their export trade with the East played a dominant role in the whole affair. Hammarskjöld thought that the denial of raw material, at least partly, could be explained as a consequence of a US priority system: Switzerland, being no NATO member, would be at the bottom of the American priority list but Zehnder considered that to be a minor possibility.<sup>28</sup>

The Swiss diplomat, Petitpierre, held the same opinion: Fieldmarshall Montgomery had informed him that NATO headquarters considered a strong and well-armed neutral Switzerland the best solution from the NATO point of view.<sup>29</sup>

Also with regard to Sweden the question of the East-West trade was still subject to American interest. But the State Department could not really make up its mind about what to do. One of the reasons was that State was aware of the importance for Sweden of imports from Eastern Europe. But pressure from Washington might also have political consequences and result in worse relations with Sweden.<sup>30</sup> In that way the US might have hazarded the far going Swedish voluntary cooperation as regards the embargo lists.

But despite that collaboration not all the departments in Washington were satisfied. The Pentagon insisted that Sweden should include *all* the commodities on the US embargo lists on penalty of an export stop of almost all American goods to Sweden. The Trade department was less radical, although it also desired an essential change in the Swedish trade policy. The department happened to be under heavy pressure of US business circles which were worried about their own export position and that's why demanded that the entire Western world should follow the American directives.<sup>31</sup> But all the Swedish concessions appeared in the end not to be enough for the American. In the fall of 1950 they demanded also information from Sweden about her transit trade with Eastern Europe.<sup>32</sup>

Nor did the CoCom give way. On October 26 1950 a Sub Committee discussed the question of which procedure was to be followed in order to obtain the Swedish and Swiss cooperation. The US delegate informed the committee members that any considerable extension of Sweden's export controls, in view of it's foreign policy, might prove to be embarrassing for Stockholm. In addition Sweden had in effect since November 1949 a decree whereby

commodities of war and machinery and tools for the manufacture of all the other items could be exported only under special licenses. The US appeared also to be satisfied about the

"effective control of transit trade through Sweden by means of a comparison by Customs Authorities of incoming and outgoing shipping documents. When the destination had been changed on the outgoing documents, the goods are not permitted to move".<sup>33</sup>

The American delegate declared also that Washington had obtained an undertaking from Stockholm that war materials imported from the US would not be reexported to the Russian sphere. But the US control on Sweden was by no means conclusive because there was no

"control over the reexport of any commodities except for exchange control measures which prevent reexport of goods for which Swedish payments were made in scarce currencies".<sup>34</sup>

If Sweden really wanted, so was the opinion in Washington, she could stop all exports because she had the administrative apparatus for such an inspection.

Also the UK appeared to have informal contacts with Stockholm, especially with regard to the reexport of certain security goods. London was quite satisfied with the measure of cooperation she received from the Swedish authorities in those particular cases. Moreover the Swedes had assured that they were willing to cooperate in the future.

Switzerland offered the US the same problems as Sweden: lack of *total* cooperation, while the leakage of strategic commodities was considerably more serious than it was the case in Sweden. The Sub-Committee decided, after having evaluated the previous approaches which had been made to the governments of both neutrals "that the recent offers of informal cooperation by both countries should be followed up as expeditiously as possible." The ultimate purpose however remained "to secure from Sweden and Switzerland the same controls as are operated by the participating countries." As a practical compromise for the time being it was suggested to try to have the Swedes and Swiss accepted:

"a. a parallel control over a selected list of items where Swedish (or Swiss) production is an important gap in the agreed international controls

b. control over transit trade and free ports

c. guarantee against the reexport of strategic goods originating in participating countries".

On the meeting of October 27 the Coordinating Committee approved of the conclusions of the Sub-Committee's report.<sup>35</sup>

But the Swedes stubbornly held to their policy of *voluntary* cooperation and kept on receiving embargo lists as "information". A common demarche of England, France and the US was not able to change that attitude. But England showed, contrary to the US, considerable understanding for the position of Sweden. Hammarskjöld was assured that the Foreign Office had comprehension for the Swedish attitude but at the same time he was warned that the British probably officially would continue to exercise pressure on Sweden. But that was nothing to worry about because it was only a reflection of the pressure which London was exposed to herself from the US.

Makin, the official of the Foreign Office, who informed Hammarskjöld about this situation, assured him also that the Americans would continue to exercise pressure on Sweden, no matter what their counter arguments would be.<sup>36</sup>

The official answer to the joint US, French and English demarche was left on January 28 1951. It read:

"The autonomous policy which Sweden has pursued already for a considerable period of time as regards exports of commodities of international security interest, is characterized mainly by the following two principles. Firstly, the Swedish authorities permit exports of war materials only to such countries or group of countries which have been traditionally been purchasers of war materials manufactured in Sweden. Secondly, exports of commodities which, according to available technical information, are of strategic importance, although not classified as war materials in the technical sense of the word, are allowed to expand only to those same countries or groups of countries. In view of the relatively low level of exports of such commodities to other markets than the ones referred to, this commercial policy, based on the concept of 'normal trade', has been considered satisfactory from the point of view of general security interests. As to a possible departure, on grounds of security, from the principles outlined above in the way of a

discriminatory reduction of exports in relation to one particular trading area below the traditional level of those exports, it may be pointed out, judging the cases from a purely practical standpoint, that such a policy would involve evident risks for Sweden's own possibilities to secure an adequate supply of goods essential to the economic and military strength of Sweden. It is not possible to anticipate that the trading partner in question would limit itself to countermeasures corresponding only to the reduction of exports; far reaching reprisals in such fields, whereby Sweden supposedly is particularly vulnerable, must also be expected."<sup>37</sup>

In other words: If Sweden went too far in her export restrictions she might jeopardize her own, essential imports from the communistic bloc. Especially coal from Poland was in that respect very important. Not only because of the importance for the Swedish industry but also because of the fact that it could be used by the Soviet Union as an instrument of pressure. Coal was vital for Sweden's economy, especially since the imports from Great Britain had stopped.<sup>38</sup>

Butterworth, the US ambassador who had succeeded Freeman Matthews, argued in a conversation with Boheman and Hammarskjöld, that coal meant less for Sweden than iron ore for Poland. Butterworth's tone during the meeting was described as "bullying".<sup>39</sup> The ideas of the new American ambassador were contested by Hammarskjöld who maintained that Sweden only thanks to her possession of iron ore had been able to obtain coal from Poland: iron ore had been played off against coal. Hammarskjöld also asserted that it was impossible to discuss those two raw materials as isolated phenomena but that they instead should be looked at as part of the total trade.<sup>40</sup>

Boheman reported from Washington that the Americans experienced the Swedish answer to the joint demarche as a confirmation of the *status quo*. The US would have welcomed very much a statement wherein Stockholm expressed her willingness to cut off the strategic exports to, for example, Poland, with that measure risking a Polish embargo on the shipment of coal to Sweden. The US would in such a case only be too glad to compensate for the coal. It was also remarked that the Swedish exports could easily be sold on the Western markets. Both State Department and the Department of



Commerce showed themselves most worried about the continuing export of roller and ball bearings. Boheman had also learned that the Swiss were under constant pressure from the US whereby electric generators played the same role as roller and ball bearings did in Sweden.<sup>41</sup>

Also Denmark and Norway appeared to be under American pressure regarding their trade with the East. Under the Marshall Aid conditions and as members of the CoCom both countries had accepted not to ship goods from the embargo lists. The US also urged Denmark, being a NATO member, not to ship goods which export *might* imply a reduction of the Danish defense potential, even when those commodities were not included in the official lists. As an example electric motors were mentioned.

The Americans also controlled the transit trade wherever and whenever they could. Like the Swedes had the Danes pointed out to their dependence on Polish coal for their economy. But promises for compensation coal, like the US had done in the case of Sweden, were not made. Instead the Danes were told to regard it as a natural part of the "common sacrifice" which all the Atlantic Pact members had to take upon themselves.<sup>42</sup>

In the summer of 1951 the Stockholm approach of the embargo policy was that she followed her own course but that, concerning export licenses, consideration was taken with regard to commodities which could be used for (potential) warfare. Existent trade agreements were honoured but the embargo lists should, with regard to new trade agreements, be taken into consideration. The US, France and Great Britain were promised to be kept informed of the development of the Swedish with regard to the East.<sup>43</sup>

It is evident that the Swedish government went along with the embargo policy as far as she could within the frame of its policy of neutrality and that she even exceeded the line of what can be regarded as acceptable within the framework of her foreign policy. Such departures were defended with an appeal to the own national security: selling war materials to the East would undermine Sweden's own safety. On the other hand the Swedish dependence on raw materials as coal provided the Eastern bloc a certain grip on the government in Stockholm. It is equally evident that the government in

Washington considered the Swedish measures insufficient and sought ways to improve that situation.

Washington turned , and not quite unsuccessfully, her attention to private Swedish companies from which she, because of some incidents that had occurred during the Second World War, could extract certain favours.

### 8.3 Embargo policy and Ryssavtalet.

The historian of the Embargo policy, Adler-Karlsson, has wondered if certain Swedish companies have been forced by the US to participate in their policy.<sup>44</sup> His theory was that several Swedish firms that had secretly cooperated with the Nazi's during the Second World War had been put under American pressure to thwart the implementation of the Ryssavtalet and accordingly make their tribute to the embargo policy.

The well known Wallenberg bankers were mentioned as victims of this American black mail policy. The funds of the Wallenbergs and their *Stockholms Enskilda Bank* had been blocked in the USA because of their part in the so called Bosch Affair.<sup>45</sup> In exchange for the release of their funds the Americans demanded the participation of the Wallenbergs in their embargo policy. In the light of the enormous influence of the Wallenbergs on all spheres of Swedish industrial life it would have been a real master stroke of Washington: participation of the Wallenbergs meant an excellent completion of the far going *voluntary* cooperation of Stockholm.

It is a theory that cannot be proved with *material sources*<sup>46</sup> but it is a theory with a high degree of credibility and probability on ground of circumstantial evidence.

It has been established that Swiss firms were under continuous pressure to take part in the embargo policy<sup>47</sup> and there is also evidence that the US authorities have proposed such a deal - participation in the embargo policy in exchange for the release of blocked funds - to another tycoon of the Swedish industry who was in a similar position as the Wallenberg brothers: Axel Wenner-Gren.<sup>48</sup>

Known are also the early US threats (from the fall of 1946 onwards) of denial of raw materials if Sweden did not stop her exports to the Soviet Union.<sup>49</sup> Managing director Ericson of ASEA visited Undén on the 12th of September 1946 and informed him that he had learned that private US firms would boycott the sale of their products to Sweden if their goods, in one

form or another, would find their way to Russia. He also said he was afraid that the American government was going to boycott the Ryssavtalet.<sup>50</sup> The management of ASEA had "clear evidence"<sup>51</sup> about American plans to hamper the implementation of the Trade and Credit Agreement which was to last from 1947 to 1952. For that reason the firm sought contact with the Swedish government on the highest level.

Undén was warned that if the American deliveries of raw materials and semi-products to Sweden would be stopped or on purpose would be retarded, the whole Swedish industry would get into a "very critical situation" and deliveries to all other customers would be endangered.<sup>52</sup>

ASEA proposed to take up an extra article in the agreement with Russia in which it was formulated that because of lack of raw materials "(America ought in that respect preferably not be mentioned)" the provisions of the Ryssavtalet might not be fulfilled.<sup>53</sup> Ericson's concern that Washington would boycott the firms that made deliveries to the Soviet Union elicited from Undén the statement that if

"the American should introduce special provisions for prohibition of deliveries to Russia or through Sweden to Russia, that would be tantamount to a break of relations between the USA and the Soviet Union and almost imply a state of war, and in that case would imply a considerable danger for Sweden that then had associated herself too much to the one party through failing to make deliveries to Russia."<sup>54</sup>

Undén was during that occasion also informed that most of the important contractors which were involved in the Ryssavtalet shared the view that was brought to the fore by Torsten Ericson. ASEA's played a central role in the Ryssavtalet as already has been described. The company was Wallenberg controlled.

SKF took a similar stand as ASEA concerning the Ryssavtalet. The roller and ballbearing company was also Wallenberg dominated. Moreover its US subsidiary in Philadelphia was under the threat of a law suit for breaching anti-trust laws. It is obvious that the authorities in Washington possessed some tools that could induce SKF into participation. That SKF smuggled her products to the Soviet sphere was due to the circumstance that she was also under Soviet influence: Important properties of SKF in East Europe were situated in the Soviet zone.<sup>55</sup>

It seems plausible that this situation is *no* theory but reflects reality. But for the question of Swedish neutrality it is in fact of minor importance whether this theory about forcing private companies into collaboration holds or not. From the neutrality point of view it is most interesting to observe that in such a circumstance the official foreign policy of a democratically elected government effectively can be obstructed by a few influential businessmen. It offers a peculiar situation: a state alleges (or believes) to follow a neutral course while she in reality is involved in a policy of alignment.

In the here above outlined peculiar situation a Government may, according to International Law, not be accused of departure from neutrality because she may not be held responsible for the actions of her citizens, as long as those citizens don't trespass national laws.

## CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSIONS & EPILOGUE.

It is obvious that the question of neutrality will always bring forth a discrepancy between theory and practice. In the case of Sweden the Second World War provides us with some excellent examples, even if Undén has maintained that not Sweden's neutrality but *departures* of its neutrality were criticized. Formally, Undén's was right but he overlooked the fact that for the foreign observers the difference between neutrality and departures from neutrality had faded and become almost tantamount conceptions. The departures occurred so frequently that the credibility of Sweden's neutral course reduced to next to nothing, especially in Nazi occupied Denmark and Norway. It was for exactly that reason that those countries during the SDU negotiations declared the word "neutrality" taboo.

To establish that Denmark and Norway abandoned their policy of neutrality is easy and leaves no room for doubts. Both joined NATO, a military alliance. The answer with regard to Sweden is far more complicated. The precepts of International Law are here of little relevance because its rules of neutrality only apply to times of war and there was no war in the period which was object for my research. But that answer can neither satisfy the historian nor the political scientist and it is probably neither satisfactorily for the lawyer.

What can be concluded from this study in Swedish foreign policy at the outset of the Cold War that should split the world in two antagonistic parts? In the Swedish archives that I consulted there was nothing that leads me to think that Stockholm was ever prepared to reconsider its foreign policy. But in various chapters it has also been established that the Swedish concept of neutrality in the researched period was not always quite convincing: it was certainly not unambiguous and fundamentally dominated by Sweden's own national interests. In the words of Undén: "no country regards it as its duty to interfere in the course of events sacrificing its own safety." But national interest is not an unequivocal concept either because its interpretation depends largely on the definition of politicians who are responsible for the execution of the foreign policy. And of course those statesmen are, in turn, influenced by the spirit of the time, the actual circumstances and last but not

least by their personal backgrounds. Those factors carried much more weight in Sweden than for instance in Switzerland where neutrality was laid down in the constitution.

What would have happened if the Social Democrats had lost the 1948 elections and had been replaced by a liberal-conservative coalition under the leadership of Bertil Ohlin and with Erik Boheman as Foreign Minister? The ideas of the liberal and conservative parties were considerably more pro-West oriented and inspired than those of the social democratic party. Ohlin's neutrality attitude has not always been convincing and it is not unlikely that Erik Boheman, of whom the British had hoped that he, in case of a social democratic election defeat, should replace Undén, would have defined the national interests more in accordance with the British view of what that Swedish national interest in fact ought to be. That such a government at a given point might have changed the foreign policy is not quite unthinkable and cannot, I believe, be discounted as unfounded speculations. An alteration of the constitution would not have been necessary and neither is neutrality otherwise proclaimed as a unalterable state doctrine. The campaign of Tingsten might in the case of this hypothetical non-socialist coalition with pro-Western sympathies have born more fruit and accomplished a change in the public opinion. Neither that is pure fiction because it is an undisputable fact that the political consciousness and interest of the public at that time left much to be desired: For many citizens the meaning of the word democracy seems to have been a mystery.<sup>1</sup> Yet the above pictured scenario of 1948 is not very likely because this imaginative liberal-conservative coalition would almost certainly have needed the support of the agrarian party which pro-neutral attitude was beyond all argument.

The concept of neutrality was during the researched period indisputably rooted in a comfortable majority. And for that majority the idea of neutrality was certainly more than a phrase: It was a belief rooted in the experiences from two world wars and as it were a manifest truth.

Erlander and Undén were in the examined period (and in many years to come, respectively to 1969 and 1962) the guardians of the Swedish foreign policy and the guarantee for the continuity of that policy. But sometimes they exceeded, in their zeal to defend the neutrality, the limits of what generally

is understood by the concept of neutrality, reducing it to a rather empty phrase that perhaps adequately can be described as *nominal neutrality*: neutrality in words rather than in deeds. Here is not referred to ideological neutrality. In that respect neither Undén nor Erlander wanted to be neutral. Undén explicitly claimed the right of an own opinion and the liberty to criticise matters which he considered to be unjust; moreover ideological neutrality has no legal grounds.<sup>2</sup>

The Swedish adaptation to the American embargo policy provides us with a fine example of nominal neutrality because the foreign policy of the Erlander administration differed little from what the authorities in Washington wanted her to do. Stockholm saved her face by declaring this policy of adaptation as genuine Swedish foreign policy. In fact Sweden had little choice but following the course she did. But that is exactly the nucleus of the problem that small states, which are to a high degree depended on foreign trade, face by the execution of their foreign policy. What would be the verdict of a court on Sweden if that court should apply the wartime neutrality laws on the Swedish attitude in the embargo policy, supposing that it regarded the embargo policy as a wartime blockade and considering that the rules of neutrality prohibit the use of a neutral's territory as a base for war operations? Undén might have answered that

"The obligation to take measures against infringements of neutrality are limited to the use of means that are at disposal".<sup>3</sup>

But the implication of this imaginative answer<sup>4</sup> is also an *ad hoc* neutrality: a flexible neutrality, dominated by circumstances.

The case of the SDU provides us with another example of nominal neutrality because it was a neutrality disguised in words. Sweden wanted to stay neutral but considered that purpose to be in danger in case that her two neighbouring countries would associate themselves with a Western military pact. All of a sudden Swedish neutrality become an export product and was to embrace the whole of Scandinavia. Sweden would have formed a *military* alliance with her neighbours in order to defend her neutrality if she could have convinced her partners of the advantages of the Swedish SDU concept. Is a military alliance of neutral states not a *contradictio in terminis*? It is true that Sweden in the SDU case, in comparison with the embargo policy, did not submit to American threats of no deliveries (non-aid) but that cannot be explained by an outspoken Swedish persistency to hold to neutrality. The

real answer has nothing to do with higher principles relating to neutrality: The Erlander government simply did not believe the threats because it was convinced that the West in case of factual non-aid would have harmed the latter's own position in the first place.

The Swedish belief in neutrality is to a very high degree historically determined and certainly the Second World War has made an impressive and convincing contribution to the idea that neutrality is the policy that serves the nation's interest best.<sup>5</sup> The Cold War did not have a notable influence on the post war foreign policy of Sweden. That fact is essentially due to Östen Undén who deserves, more than anyone else, to be called the architect of post war Swedish foreign policy. He was, as already has been remarked in this study before, the *embodiment* of the Swedish neutrality. Undén held a remarkable position in the Cold War because he was one of the few statesmen who was not or hardly infected by the Cold War virus.<sup>6</sup> The Swedish Foreign Minister had a natural suspicion vis à vis the Great Powers and was convinced that their interests in most of the times did not, and neither could not, correspond with those of Sweden. Moscow trusted him, a fact of which Undén as we have experienced was fully aware, and relied on the Swedish Foreign Minister's ambition to stay outside any Western defence community. Accordingly Moscow did not put pressure on Sweden. The Soviet approach to Swedish politics was in the pertinent period more realistic than the US strategy which at times made a rather chaotic or even outspokenly unprofessional impression. The last phenomenon was largely due to the duo Cumming-Matthews at the US embassy in Stockholm.

London in its turn showed more sense of reality and understanding towards Undén's foreign policy but had always to reckon with the USA.

It has also been established above that Finland was of little or no influence on the attitude of Sweden, although sometimes, with an eye to the public opinion, another impression was evoked. In what I consider Undén's most important document on foreign policy from this period, the memorandum of April 2 1948<sup>7</sup> Finland is not even mentioned. The memorandum also confirms that Sweden's non-participation in the two World Wars of this century provided the basis for and its belief in its post war foreign policy.



With regard to the future foreign policy of Sweden the question remains in how far she, because of her virtual dependence on foreign trade and technical developments, and with only a very limited hold on private undertakings, can carry out a credible policy of neutrality. The problem will not be manifest as long as there is peace but will emerge in times of crises and definitively in case of war. The outcome will be determined by two major factors which will be the ultimate test: the amount of pressure from the side of the West and above all the extent of her stores of strategic goods. It might be expected that the problem of securing necessary supplies in the event of war will only increase with the lapse of time which is due to the constantly growing economic dependence on the rest of the world. That factor of dependence might finally result in the departure from even her nominal neutrality.

In that situation only a total nuclear war could prevent Sweden from making that ultimate choice.

### **Epilogue.**

But there is another, non-violent, phenomenon that in due time might cause Sweden to abandon her neutrality: the European Economic Community (EEC). The idea of membership was rejected in March 1971 because it would have caused the loss of her complete freedom in foreign politics and would have drawn her in the common policy of the member states. Another reason was that existing plans for a monetary and economic union would have deprived Stockholm of an essential part of her national sovereignty as far as her right to decide about her budgets and her economy was concerned.

Also the internal political situation made the adherence to the EEC quite controversial. Instead of the membership a free trade agreement with the accompanying tariff benefits was negotiated. With the European integration wave of 1992 in sight the membership is anew taken up for discussion. Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson has declared that he wants an extensive cooperation with the Community except in the field of foreign and security policy. But a membership was for the social democrats out of the question. Conservatives and liberals however do not want to exclude an EEC membership in the future, i. e. after 1992. Since late 1987 a flood of articles, dealing with the question of an eventual Swedish membership in EEC, has appeared in the Swedish media. The group that wants association seems to be growing. There is however still much debate about the kind of association. Much of the

discussion is determined by the Swedish background of neutrality and consequently the questions are mainly focused on matters of security policy as well as on the question in how far the freedom to follow one's own foreign policy is restricted. Those discussions are not likely to stop in the near future.

On the contrary: they seem only to intensify. Also the contacts on governmental level with the EEC are increasing. The European integration of 1992 might bring about something that neither two World Wars nor the Cold War could accomplish: Serious cracks in the Swedish bulwark of neutrality.

# ABBREVIATIONS of UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

ABF	Archives Bank och Fondinspektionen
ACB	Archives Centerpartiet/Bondeförbundet
ADAFO	Archives Danish Foreign Office
ADFO	Archives Dutch Foreign Office
AF	Archives Folkpartiet
AFK	Archives Flytkapitalbyrån
AHM	Archives Högerpartiet/Moderaterna
ANFO	Archives Norwegian Foreign Office
ARAB	Arbetarrörelsens Arkiv och bibliotek
ASDA	Archives Svenska Demokratiska Arbetarpartiet
ASFO	Archives Swedish Foreign Office
ASKP	Archives Sverges Kommunistiska Parti
ASR	Archives Sveriges Riksbank
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Library
IFZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte
IVA	Ivar Andersons Archives
NA	National Archives
PAC	Public Archives Canada
PRO	Public Record Office
SAMAK	Archives Nordiska Samarbetskommitten
TEA	Tage Erlander Archives
UPA	Undén Private Archives
UPD	Undén Private Diaries

## NOTES

**All the translations in this dissertation are by the author.**

### Introduction.

1. Wilhelm Agrell, "Sverige och det kalla kriget. Ett försummat forskningsområdes struktur" in: Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984, pp. 71-86. Agrell gives a survey of the studies on the Cold War and Sweden.

2. Ibidem. Agrell refers to N. Andrén-Å Landquist, *Svensk utrikespolitik efter 1945*.

Another reason, according to Agrell, for the very low profile of research was that the field was a borderland between history and political science. Few historians use to enter this field of research while the political scientists in fact were more interested in the 1960's and 1970's. Agrell maintains also that there is a general feeling among researchers that until the 1960's very little happened. Swedish foreign policy was determined and hardly subject for change. Researchers seemed for that reason simply "bored" with the subject of the immediate post war neutrality.

3. Lots of studies have appeared in Norway. Magne Skodvin's, *Norden eller Nato* was published as early as 1971. The policy of the Norwegian government with regard to access to its official archives was quite liberal and accommodating.

Denmark is still following a very restrictive admittance policy with regard to its archives.

4. Wilhelm Agrell, "Sverige och det kalla kriget. Ett försummat forskningsområdes struktur" in: Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984, pp. 71-86. Agrell argues that the Swedish State was not eager about studies in Swedish neutrality and Cold War because it did not serve the interests of the State. Sweden is with regard to this period much more restrictive than many other countries. The material is still considered to be sensitive, especially with regard to the Soviet Union and Finland. Agrell points out that research in this field even might harm the career of the researcher. Researchers can, because of infringements on national security, be brought to court. Agrell refers in that respect to the penal code, chapter 19. He also gives an example that articles of chapter 19 of the penal code were used against researchers in the so called IB case.

5. See on neutrality for instance: Barnes. Ian Ronald, "Swedish foreign policy. A response to geopolitical factors" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1974, pp. 243-261.

See also Jessup, 1936; Undén, 1963; Schwarzenberger, 1968; Ogley, 1970; Örvik, 1971; Davidson, 1972 and Nolden 1978.

See for a survey of the history of Swedish neutrality for instance Wahlbäck: 1984, (*UD informerar* nr. 3.) and Andrén. N, 1967. Also Undén, 1963.

For moral and neutrality: Krister Wahlbäck, "Neutralitet och Moral" in: *Nordisk Kontakt*, 1986, pp.348-364.

6. Schwarzenberger, 1968, pp.661-663. Two attempts of adaptation to changed conditions were made in the pre-war period: The Hague Draft on the Revision of the Rules of Warfare and the Habana Convention on Maritime Neutrality (1928).

7. Quoted from Schwarzenberger, 1968, p.550.

8. Lauterpacht, 1952, pp. 713-714. See also Schwarzenberger, 1968, pp. 90-92. Quotation at p. 91.

9. See Aalders-Wiebes, "Stockholms Enskilda Bank, German Bosch and IG Farben. A short history of cloaking" in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 1985, No. 1. pp 25-50.

10. Ian Ronald Barnes, "Swedish foreign policy. A response to geopolitical factors" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1974, pp. 243-261.

11. Interview with Sven Andersson 17-09-1986. Andersson was Party-Secretary of the Swedish Democratic Party from 1945-1948, Minister of Defence (1957-1973) and Foreign Minister (1973-1976).

12. See also Conclusions and Epilogue.

13. ASDA. Protokoll 1935-1948 A II a : 4, January 30 1945.

14. See for a survey of Sweden and the Second World War for instance Carl-gren, 1977, (Swedish edition 1973); Wahlbäck-Boberg, 1966; Alf Johansson, "Svensk medgörlighet. Ljus över Günther och Per Albin inför operation Barbarossa" in: *Historisk Tidskrift*, 1984, No. 4, pp. 391-400. and Fritz a.o., 1982. (see also the bibliography on p. 104-109).

Furthermore a great number of dissertations have been published in: SUAV, *Sverige under andra världskriget* ("Sweden during the Second World War") each volume dealing with a specific subject.

Also may be referred to a special issue of the *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1977 Vol. II "The Great Powers and the Nordic Countries 1939-1940".

See also Bernd Martin, "Deutschland und die neutralen Staaten Europas im Zweiten Weltkrieg" in: Roulet. L.E. *Les états neutres européennes et la seconde Guerre Mondiale*. Neuchatel 1985; Gunnar Häggelöf "A Test of Neutrality. Sweden in the Second World War" in: *International Affairs*, April 1960, pp 153-167 and Bruce Hopper "Sweden: A study in Neutrality" in: *Foreign Affairs*, 1945, pp. 434-449. 1945.

15. See for Sweden's trade difficulties during the second world war for instance Medlicott, 1959; Rockberger, 1973 and Häggelöf, 1958.

16. Nybom, 1978, p.38 and p.375 (note 74).

17. See Aalders, 1981.

18. UPD. 6-11-1947.

19. "Engelbrecht" was not the official (German) name of this division but the Swedes called it so after its commander general Engelbrecht. See Erlander, 1973, p. 101.

20. Alf Johansson, "Svensk medgörlighet. Ljus över Günther och Per Albin inför operation Barbarossa" in: *Historisk Tidskrift*, 1984, No. 4, pp. 391-400.
21. ASFO. HP Vol. 44 Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.
22. ASFO. HP Vol. 3468 Staffan Söderblom to E. von Post. Moscow Febr. 3 1945.
23. Schuman, 1962; Fleming, 1962, 2 volumes.
24. Andersson, 1981, p. viii. Also Harbutt, 1986.
25. See for instance Halle, 1969; Feis, 1970 and A. Schlesinger, "The origins of the Cold War" in: *Foreign Affairs*, October 1967.
26. Kolko, Joyce and Gabriel 1972; Horowitz, 1965; Appleman Williams, 1962; Alperovitz, 1965 and 1970.
27. See for. ex. Gaddis, 1972 and Yergin, 1980.  
See for a historiographical survey of the Cold War for instance: Lundestad, 1980, pp. 17-35. and Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984.
28. See for instance Clemens, 1970; Sherwin, 1975 and Yergin 1977.
29. See for the quotations Graebner, 1980, p.13 and LaFeber, 1972, p. 14.
30. See Chapter 4.1.
31. See Chapter 4.1.
32. For the Korean War and Sweden see for instance: Holmström, 1972. The book deals with the public debate in Sweden. Holmström had no admission to the archives of the Swedish Foreign Office.
33. See Adler-Karlsson, 1968.
34. The selected items may be regarded as "highlights" of the period 1945-1949 which provide us with "testmaterial" for Swedish neutrality.

## **Chapter 1: The United Nations Membership.**

1. See for instance Tingsten, 1964, pp.12-88 and Jones, 1939 passim. See for the Swedish functioning in the League: Möller, 1986, pp.88-99 and Landqvist, 1968, pp. 76-86.
2. Ørvik, 1971, p. 121.
3. Quoted from Ørvik, 1971, p. 122.
4. All quotations from Ørvik, 1971, p. 122.
5. The article ran as follows:

"Should any member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Article 12, 13 or 15, it shall *ipse facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking state, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking state and the nationals of any other state, whether a Member of the League or not. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League. The Members of the League agree further that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this article in order to minimize the loss and inconveniences resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting special measures aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking state, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are cooperating to protect the covenants of the League."

Quoted from Ørvik, 1971, p. 123.

6. Quoted from Ørvik, 1971, p. 124.

7. Tingsten, 1964, p. 37.

8. Wahlbäck, 1984, p.22.

9. ARAB. SAP Minutes 5-2-1946. Minutes 1935-1948 A II : 4.

10. Dagens Nyheter June 22 1946.

11. Andra Kammaren Protokoll, 1945, No. 34 p. 22.

12. Undén, 1963. p. 27. The leader of the oppositional liberal party Bertil Ohlin was of the same opinion but did not make a political issue out of it: Ohlin, 1975, p. 336.

13. Wahlbäck, 1984, p. 22.

14. See Ørvik, 1971, pp. 255-256.

15. See for an extensive treatment of the Veto: Morgenthau, 1973, pp. 302-304.

16. See for Sweden and the Korean war for instance: Holmström, 1972.

17. Quoted from Wahlbäck, 1984, p.51.

18. Quoted from Hofstadter, 1969, p. 414. See for the complete text of the Truman Doctrine pp. 411-415.

19. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p. 773.

20. UPD. 6-11-1947.

21. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p. 775.

22. FRUS, 1947, Vol. I p. 162.

23. Lundestad, 1980, pp. 94-104.

24. IZG. 037.3 ZI 092 no. 2422. OSS report *Sweden and the USSR: the Swedish Attitude and Policy*. June 30 1945.

The unrealistic reports of US observers in Sweden (and also in the other two Scandinavian countries) and their influence on the State Department is an often returning theme in the chapters on the Scandinavian Defence Union.

25. Quoted from Morgenthau, 1973, p. 564. For the complete Charter: pp.551-578.

## **Chapter 2: Between East and West. The credit and tradeagreement with Russia.**

1. Erlander, 1973, pp. 272-275.

2. Hägglöf, 1984, p. 227. Hägglöf has been present at the negotiations on the agreement and gives in this book an extensive report on the matter. See for an extensive survey of the Credit and Trade Agreement also Birgit Karlsson, "Rysskrediten 1946 - en ödesfråga för nationen?" in: *Historisk Tidskrift*, 1988, No.3, pp. 340-361.

3. See Chapter 8.

4. Hägglöf, 1958, p. 154.

5. Hägglöf, 1958, p. 155.

6. I. Hägglöf, 1984, p. 188.

7. Svenska Dagbladets årsbok. Stockholm, 1947, pp. 53-54.

8. *US News and World Report*, October 29 1946.

9. See for the debates in the Riksdag: Andra Kammaren Protokoll, 1946, No. 36 p.14 ff and Första Kammaren Protokoll, 1946, No. 36 p. 3 ff.

The Riksdagcommittee that dealt with Ryssavtalet expressed a unanimous opinion but the doubts of the opposition were put forward in a separate statement. There was no voting in the First Chamber.

10. Folkpartiet (organ of Folkpartiet) 1946 November nr. 7.

11. Fritz, 1982, pp. 5-16.

12. See also Tingsten, 1963, p. 126 and Erlander, 1973, p.273.

13. Folkpartiet, 1946, November. No. 7.



14. Hägglöf, 1984, p. 267.

15. ASKP. Protokoll SKP. A U och Riksdagsgruppens sammanträde Nov. 15-16 1947, p.5.

16. Hägglöf, 1984, p. 208.

17. *Ny Dag*, July 11 1946.

18. Erlander, 1973, pp. 275-276.

19. See for instance the *Morgon Tiden* editorials 1946: April 15; June 18; July 9, 10, 11, 12; August 21, 23, 27, 28, 31; September 2, 8, 9, 25; October 23, 29, 31; November 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 28, and December 28. 1947: February 2; March 28; April 4; May 11; June 2, 6; September 24 and October 26 and 30.

20. See for instance *Morgon Tidningen* 1946 July 2 and December 14. See for Undén's anonymous writings Chapter 6.4.

21. *Morgon Tidningen*, 1946 November 7.

22. I have no intention to give an overall view of the debates in the Press on the Ryssavtalet. Here I have selected a number of newspapers which may be regarded as representative for the social democrats, the conservatives, liberals, communists and papers with roots in the agrarian party. The selection is important because it reflects the first signs of cold war thinking in the post war period. That way of thinking can of course not be separated from the classic Swedish *Russophobia*, and, since the Revolution of 1917, from fear of Soviet communism.

The main reason for my referring to newspapers however is that in the various official party minutes with regard to the items which I deal with in the Chapters 3, 4 and 8, with the exception of the social democrat papers, little or nothing can be found on the pertinent subjects.

*Dagens Nyheter* (liberal/independent) 1946, June 17; July 8, 9, 11, 14; August 6, 19; September 1, 8, 15; October 10, 18, 20, 22, 24, 29; November 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15; December 7, 27. 1947: January 5, 26, 28; May 5, 7, 18; June 1; July 15; September 11; October 23, 25, 31; December 11, 12.

*Svenska Dagbladet* (conservative) 1946: April 9, May 16; June 28; July 2; August 18, 20; October 10, 19, 24; November 8, 9, 14.

*Stockholms Tidningen* (liberal) 1946: July 14; March 3; September 24, 26; October 24, 26; November 23.

*Expressen* (liberal) 1946: April 24; June 17; September 5; October 9, 17; November 9, 14, 16; December 4. 1947: July 18; September 4; October 26; November 3 and 4.

*Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (conservative) 1946: June 5; August 31; September 14; October 7, 9, 10, 18, 20, 23, 24, 26; November 9, 14, 19; December 4, 28, 29. 1947: February 2; May 13, 16; August 1; September 2, 5, 19; October 30.

*Morgon Tidningen* (soc.dem.) 1946: April 15; June 18; July 9, 10, 11, 12; August 21, 23, 27, 28, 31.; September 2, 8, 9, 25; October 23, 29, 31; November 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 28, and December 28.  
1947: February 2; March 28; April 4; May 11; June 2, 6; September 24 and October 26 and 30.

*Arbetet* (soc. dem.) 1947: November 9; December 14.

*Ny Dag* (comm.) 1946: July 8, 9, 11, 13, 20; August 17.

*Skånska Dagbladet* (agrarian) 1946: June 28.

23. There is as regards as the Swedish Social Democratic Party a difference between anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. The party was very anti-communistic but never particularly anti-Soviet.

The non-Socialist parties were both anti-communist and anti-Soviet.

24. See for the attitude of the press: Nybom, 1978, pp. 185-242 and 354-355 and Aalders, 1981, pp. 53-71. The daily newspaper *Aftonbladet* was strongly pro-German. That may be confusing but it must be remembered that *Aftonbladet* at that time was not a social democratic newspaper as it is today. It was at that time owned by Torsten Kreuger, a businessman. See for the attitude in the Swedish parliament, government and military circles: Johanson, 1984, pp.258-270 and pp.273-276.

25. See Chapter 4.7

26. For the connections see Söderpalm, 1976, pp.109-11, 135, 136, 140, 144, 154 160.

27. *US News and World Report*, October 29 1946.

28. NA. RG 59 856 50/10 3046 Box 6278

29. Erlander, 1973, p. 274. For the rockets see Trevor Barnes, "The secret Cold War: the CIA and American foreign policy in Europe 1946 - 1956" Part 1 in: *Historical Journal*, 1981 No. 2, pp. 399-415. See also Gerard Aalders, "Spökraketten. De vliegende paarden van de Apocalyps" in: *Vrij Nederland*, December 12 1987 and "Spökraketer över Sverige" in: *Dagens Nyheter*, January 3 1988. Remarkable is that Ingemar Hägglöf (1986) in 1986 still believed that the Soviets were behind those "ghostrockets" (see p.248).  
For Undén's memorandum ASFO. HP vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén, March 2 1948.

30. Hägglöf, 1984, pp. 233-237.

31. Hägglöf, 1984, pp.229-230.

32. Tingsten, 1965, p. 131. For Tingsten's anti-Ryssavtalet campaign pp, 124-133.

33. Tingsten, 1964, pp.131-133.

34. Erlander, 1973, p. 278.

35. Erlander, 1973, p. 274 and 278; Ohlin, 1975, p. 65. See also Tingsten, 1964, p. 131.
36. Glete, 1983, pp.146-147.
37. NA, RG 226, OSS files, R & A No. 2972, 30-06-1945.
38. AFK. FKB Vol. 7 Secret Archives.
39. AFK. FKB Vol. 7 Secret Archives. Memorandum of "iakttagelser vid censurväsendet under tiden 1.1 - 31.3 1944". Handelsrapport nr. 1 1944. "Återupptagandet av handeln med Ryssland."
40. Karlsson, 1987, p.89.
41. Första Kammaren Protokoll, 1946, No. 36 p. 22.
42. Första Kammaren Protokoll, 1946, No. 36,p. 77.
43. UPD. 4-10-1946. Undén's exclamation mark. Also 23-10-1946.
44. Hermansson, 1966, pp. 101-103.
45. See Chapter 8.3.
46. Department of State Press Release. September 4 1946. No. 163.
47. HSTL. Box 20 Naval Aid Files Folder State Briefs. September 9 1946, Summary of Telegrams.  
*Morgon Tidningen*, November 11 1946. Undén in an anonymous editorial.
48. UPA. L 108 Vol. 24 copy of note of the Foreign Office of the Soviet Union to E Durbrow, temporary US Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow, August 26 1946.
49. UPA. L 108. Vol. 24 Memorandum by Herman Eriksson, September 30 1946.
50. Hägglöf, 1984, p. 226.
51. UPD. 28-09-1946.
52. Hägglöf, 1984, pp. 240-241.
53. NA. RG 84, Box 3, Stockholm PC Conf. files 1945-1946. Folder 631. Safehaven - Bosch. Donald W. Smith to the Secretary of State, Sept. 10 1946.
54. UPA. L 108 Vol. 24 Memorandum by Herman Eriksson, September 30 1946. Ibidem Memorandum by R. von Heidenstam, September 10 1946.
55. Hägglöf, 1984, pp. 281-282. Also Ohlin had a similar opinion about Sohlman. See Ohlin, 1975, p. 335.
56. Ohlin, 1975, p. 64.

57. IVA. L 91:3 Conversation with Tjernychev, April 17 1947.

58. TEA. E 1: 3 Ombudsmöte nr. 3 mellan svenska och ryska regeringsombuden. March 17 1948. For more extreme prices (ASEA, Lindholmen and Oskarshamn Yard) see: Birgit Karlsson, 1987, pp. 94 and 105. Karlsson's explanation is that the Swedish companies did not need the Soviet orders. That's why their position vis à vis Moscow increased and they were able to ask whatever prices they wanted. The Soviets were accordingly forced to pay much higher prices than they originally intended to do. (p.94).

59. Adler-Karlsson, Gunnar "Avsatte USA Jacob Wallenberg? Sverige, neutralitet och Sovjet Embargot" in: *Dagens Nyheter*, February 20 1979, Birgit Karlsson's explanation is that the Swedish companies did not need the Soviet orders. That's why their position vis à vis Moscow increased and they were able to ask whatever prices they wanted. The Soviets were accordingly forced to pay much higher prices than they originally intended to do. Karlsson, 1987, p. 94.

60. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, p.168.

61. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, pp. 168-169.

62. Ohlin, 1975, p. 65.

63. Ohlin, 1975, p. 65.

64. For the relation with the embargo policy see: Chapter 8.3.

### **Chapter 3: Marshall aid. Not only for the dollars.**

1. Halle, 1967, p. 127.

2. Quoted from Hofstadter, 1969, p. 419.

3. Milward, 1984, p. 64. For a brief historical sketch of the Marshall Plan see pp. 90-92 and 57-58. See also Lundestad, 1980, p. 133 and 135.

4. Truman, 1956, p. 121 and 119.

5. UPD. 15-6-1947.

6. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén, October 14 1948. Conversation with Marshall.

7. LaFeber, 1972, p. 49 and 37 and Yergin, 1980. See also FRUS, 1948, Vol. III pp. 390-391.

8. TEA. EI : 3. Memorandum of March 19 1948. State Department wanted the information "fast" i.e. before the first of April 1948.

9. FRUS, 1948, Vol. III pp. 473-4. Aug 9 1948. Matthews to the Secretary of State.

- Ibidem. p. 315. US ambassador Caffery in France to Secretary of State, July 8 1947.
10. *Expressen* 16-03-1948.
  11. ASDA. VU protokoll SAP A:II:B: 11-14 1941-1952. May 28 1948 § 88.
  12. ASDA. VU protokoll 1939-1950. A:I:A 19:22 Meeting of Jan. 18 1948.
  13. UPD. 1-04-1948.
  14. UPD. 2-4-1948.
  15. See Milward, 1984 pp. 116-117. Quotation on p. 117. OEEC is the abbreviation of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation.
  16. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, p. 24. On this page some more American conditions are mentioned. See also Milward, 1984, pp. 120 -122.
  17. TEA. E 1:3 February 24 1948. Embassy Moscow to Foreign Office Stockholm.
  18. UPD. 15-06-1948 and Ohlin, 1975, pp. 159-163.
  19. Radiotjänst, p. 41.
  20. AHM. A I : 3. Bil. 5 Riksstämmans Prot. 1948, 14.06.1948.
  21. ASKP. Partistyreliens- och VU utskottets protokoll 1948. Upprop från Sverges Kommunistiska Parti, April 8 1948.
  22. Quoted from Radiotjänst, 1948, pp. 26 -27.
  23. ASDA. SAP Nordiska Samak 1947 - 1948. F : XXVI: C: S. Stockholm meeting Febr. 7-8 1948.
  24. ADFO. Archives Embassy Stockholm, Box. 2, Secret Archives no. 3897/747 Sept. 14 1948.
  25. *Tiden*, 1947, No. 39. p. 631.
  26. TEA. E 1:3 Swedish Report covering the period up to September 30 1948.
  27. ASFO. HP Vol. 44 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the Italian ambassador, April 19 1948. Also: ASDA Vu prot. A:II:B: 11-14 1941-1952. May 28 1954 § 88. See also Erlander, 1973, p. 369. Also interview with Erlander on March 4 1985. See also UPD. 11-02-1948.
  28. See Chapter 8.
  29. UPD. 28-06-1948.
  30. Interview with Sven Andersson, September 17 1986. See for Sven Andersson also Misgeld, 1984, pp. 134 -135.

31. NA. NG 31 E 6, Douglas le Pan Papers. Vol.7. 1 File 4. November 17 1947.
32. Quoted from Kolko, 1972, p. 378.
33. ASFO, HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange in Paris, November 20 1948.
34. ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Sohlman in the Utrikesnämnden Jan. 1 1949.  
Quite remarkable in that respect is a (earlier) diary note of Erlander (March 3 1948) where he writes that all the Swedish efforts to stay neutral were rather fruitless when the Soviets already experienced the Swedish taking part in the Marshall Plan as an association with the Western bloc. TEA. VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund.
35. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Tjernychev, January 29 1948.
36. IVA. L 91/3. 10-07-1947
37. TEA. E:1:1 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange, June 28 1947.
38. Pharo, H "Bridgebuilding and Reconstruction. Norway faces the Marshall plan" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1976: pp. 124-153.  
See also Pharo, H "The Cold War in Norwegian and International Historical Research" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1985, Vol. 10 nr. 3. pp.163-189.
39. In retrospect Lange seems to have admitted that NATO was a "political military complement to the Marshall Plan". TEA. F VIII:2 Memorandum of a conversation with Foreign Minister Halvard Lange, September 17 1963.
40. TEA. E 1:3 February 24 1948. Embassy Moscow to Foreign Office Stockholm. Referred is to *Novaja Vremja*, No. 8 in which an article was published about the Marshall Plan and the Scandinavia. The author was P. Rysakov.
41. For Norway and Denmark and the Marshall Plan see for instance: Udgaard, 1973, pp. 208-223; Eriksen, 1972, pp. 26-27 and 65-66; Skodvin, 1971, pp.54-55; Lundestad, 1980, pp.132 -166; Clausen, 1984, pp. 16-20; Udenrigsministeriet, 1952 and 1957 and Misgeld, 1984, p. 79 and pp.115-145.
42. Pharo, H "Bridgebuilding and Reconstruction. Norway faces the Marshall plan" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1976: pp. 124-153.
43. Misgeld, 1984, p. 131.
44. See chapter 8, passim.
45. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén of the meeting of the Scandinavian Foreign Ministers in Stockholm, Sept. 11 1948.

#### Chapter 4: The Growing tensions of 1948: the prelude to Undén's SDU proposal.

1. Undén considered that the parties in Berlin "played for high stakes" but that they all were afraid of war and that's why would not go too long: UPD. 1-3-07-1948.
2. Achilles, Th. C "US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliances", Part 1. in: *NATO Review*, Vol. 27 No. 4. 1979 (August). pp.11-14 (quotation)  
Not everybody agrees that the Dunkirk Treaty was the nucleus or starting point of Nato. See for instance Bert Zeeman "Britain and the Cold War: An alternative Approach. The Treaty of Dunkirk Example" in: *European History Quarterly*, 1986, Vol. 16. No. 3, pp. 343-367. Zeeman distinguishes three different opinions in that respect.
3. Quoted from Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1948, p. 9062.
4. For the complete text of the Treaty of Brussels: *United Nations-Treaty Series*, Vol. 19, 1948. pp. 51-63. New York, 1949.
5. See Wiebes-Zeeman, "The Pentagon negotiations. March 1948: the launching of the North Atlantic Treaty" in: *International Affairs*, 1983, Vol. 59, No. 3 pp. 351-363.
6. See for some recent studies on the formation of Nato f.ex. Wiebes-Zeeman, 1983; Riste, 1985; de Staercke a.o., 1985; Kaplan, 1985. See of an older study for instance Reid, 1977.
7. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.
8. See for quotation TEA. : F VIII: 1 Vol. 365 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 1. and ASFO. HP 1 Ba 08 London Embassy to Foreign Office, Stockholm, January 21 1948.
9. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.
10. Ibidem.
11. Haskel, 1976, p. 57.
12. UPD. 8-12-1947.
13. UPD. 23-01-1948.
14. UPD. 26-01-1948. (Undén's underlining).
15. UPD. 26-01-1948.
16. Undén was referring to *Dagens Nyheter* and *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*. UPD. 4-02-1948.
17. UPD. 27-01-1948.

18. UPD. 26-01-1948.
19. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum of conversation with Fleisher, 6-2-1948.
20. ASFO. HP vol. 43. Memorandum of a visit of Henderson of the British Embassy with a telegram of Bevin, 7-2-1948.
21. ASFO. HP Vol. 241. Letter Boheman to Undén of a conversation with Orme Sargent, 2-3-1948.
22. See also Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.
23. See the chapters on the SDU.
24. See Skodvin, 1971, pp.66-73 and Lundestad, 1980, pp. 198-207.
25. TEA. F viii : 2 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, Memorandum of a conversation of Lennart Forsman with Lange in the Storting on September 17 1963.
26. TEA. F VIII :1 Vol. 365 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.2.
27. It must be pointed however out that Lie by then had not much influence in Norway and its Social democratic party.
28. TEA. F VIII :1 Vol. 365 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.3-4. Beck-Friis' view that Lange, more or less, already had made up his mind can also be found in ASFO. Vol. 43. Letter to Undén Febr. 6 1948.
29. TEA. F VIII :1 Vol. 365 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 4.
30. Quoted from *Svenska Dagbladet's* editorial of February 8 1948.  
See for reactions in the Soviet press also Hetland: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No. 4, p. 5.
31. Hetland: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No.4 p. 6.
32. Möller, 1986, p. 303.
33. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Tjernychev, 29-1-1948.
34. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén, February 2 1948.
35. Quoted from Yergin, 1980, pp. 346-347.
36. Trevor Barnes, "The secret Cold War: the CIA and American foreign policy in Europe 1946-1956" Part I in: *Historical Journal* 1981 No. 2. pp. 399-415
37. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén of a visit of the British Ambassador, March 2 1948.
38. UPD. 21-02-1948.



39. ASDA. Partistyrrelsens Protokoll SAP A:1:A 19-22. January 18 1948. With regard to the communist party see the party paper *Ny Dag*, March 4 and 8 1948. See also their periodical *Vår Tid*, 1948, No. 3, pp. 11-14.

40. The USA on the contrary usually provoked a mild state of devotion in the liberal leader. Ohlin was seized with an aversion for both communism and social democracy. In his memoirs Ohlin is outspokenly rancorous against the social democratic party and its two best known exponents Undén and Erlander. Those feelings of antipathy were, as a matter of fact, mutual.

41. TEA. F VIII : 1 Vol. 365. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.5.

42. See Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.

43. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the Italian ambassador, April 19 1948.

44. The matter is also put forward by the Finnish historian Jukka Nevakivi, "Finland och det kalla kriget" in: Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984, pp. 27-42. See for the text of Stalin's letter, Paasikivi's answer, drafts and final text of the TFCMA for instance Krosby, 1981, pp. 439-445.

45. See Wiebes-Zeeman "Opdoemende contouren van het Noord Atlantisch Verdrag. Onderhandelingen in het Pentagon in maart 1948" in: *Internationale Spectator*, January 1982, pp.50-58

46. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the Italian ambassador, April 19 1948.

47. TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 9. See also Chapter 6.6.

48. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the British ambassador, March 2 1948. Undén had also told Marshall in Paris that the Fins wanted the Swedes to continue their policy of neutrality. See also HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén on a conversation with Marshall (in Paris), October 14 1948.

49. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 4 (March 24 1948). The businessmen Erlander referred to were von Heidenstam (Exportföreningen) and Danielsen (Uddeholm AB).

50. Erlander, 1973, p. 371.

51. See for the details Skodvin, 1971, pp. 91-113.

52. See for the "threat" in Denmark: Petersen, Nikolaj "Danish and Norwegian Alliance Policies 1948-1949: A comparative analysis" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1979, pp. 193-210 and Dau, 1969, pp. 179-180. See also Clausen, 1984, pp. 54-66.

53. UPD. 09-03-1948.

54. UPD. 09-03-1948.

55. UPD. 10-03-1948.

56. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Letter Beck-Friis to Undén, March 9 1949. FRUS, 1948, Vol.III p. 45.

57. See Erlander, 1973, p.371. Also in private conversation on March 4 1985 Erlander said that he had not believed the rumours. Sven Andersson, party-chairman at that time, said the same during our talk on September 17 1986. From Undén are such explicit statements, as far as I know, not recorded.

58. See for communism in Sweden for instance Holmberg, 1982.

59. ARAB. SAP Partistyrrelsens Protokoll. Rulle 6 A:/A: 1939-1950. Sammanträde 18 (but also 28 is given as a date) April 1946.

60. ARAB. SAP Partistyrrelsens Protokoll. Rulle 6 A:/A: 1939 - 1950. Meeting of 18 January 1948. Par. 7.

61. ASDA. SAMAK SAP Nordiska SAMAK 1945-1946. F:xxvl:c:4. Copenhagen conference 5 - 6 January 1946.  
SAMAK SAP Nordiska 1947 1948. F:xxvl:c:5 Oslo conference 5 - 6 January 1947.

62. ASDA. SAP partisekreterarens Utländska Korr. 1945 - 1949. E:v:a:1 Letter to Mr. Morgan Philips, The Labour Party, London, 1 February 1946. Forty years later (17-09-1986) Sven Andersson declared in an interview with me that the communists never were looked at as "a serious threat" and that there never had been fear "for a sharing of the Czechoslovakian fate."

63. UPD. 03-03-1948.

64. AF. Folkpartiets protokoll 1947. Folkpartiets förtroende råd, January 1 1947. bil. 5.  
"Utkast till Folkpartiets Valmanifest, 1948", p.1 (undated) See also the draft (utkast) of 1984, May 9, p.1 and 2.

65. ARAB. Social Demokratiska Riksdagsgruppen Arkiv. Förtroenderådets protokoll 1944-1952 A:I a:4, May 24 1949.

66. See Erlander, 1973, p. 272; Ohlin, 1975, pp. 115-121; See for Erlander's moderate attitude also Radiotjänst, 1949, pp.46-49. Also AF. "Utkast till Folkpartiets Valmanifest, 1948 May 9". Quite remarkable is a document in the Archives of the Dutch Foreign Office ADFO. (Box 198 nr. 3178/540 Emb. Stockholm Archives. Letter Teixeira de Mattos August 12, 1949) in which a conversation is reported of the Dutch Ambassador with Erlander. Erlander is apparently not afraid of the Swedish communists "who generally loves talking". Erlander told Teixeira that hardly any measures were taken against communism. Teixeira was surprised to hear that telephones were not bugged and that correspondence was not censored, neither with regard to foreign nor to home correspondence; not even of "notorious communists". During my interview with Erlander on 4 March 1985. I told him that he had made a "modest" impression on Teixeira. Erlander denied at that occasion that he had

been so "modest" on communism. He had only been afraid that the communists should go "underground". He asked me for a translation of Texeira's letter which he received from me a few months later but he deceased before he could give his comments.

Also other sources than Texeira give the impression that Erlander was not a real die-hard on communism. That he said not to agree with those impressions -almost 40 years later - has, probably, no real significance.

67. PRO. FO 371/77707, N 2740, Lambert of the British Embassy Stockholm to Hankey, Foreign Office, London. March 17 1949. Top Secret. All quotations from documents in the PRO appear by permission of the controller of her Majesty's Stationary Office.

68. PRO. FO 371/77707 N 2740 Lambert of the British Embassy Stockholm to Hankey, Foreign Office, London. March 17 1949. Top Secret.

69. AHM. Högerpartiets Arkiv Blll:1, Högerns Riksorganisation till Förbundens ombudsmän och ordförande, 7 April 1948.

Högerns Riksorganisation till förbundens ombudsmän, 12 March 1948.

Letter Högerns Riksorganisation, 2 April 1949 to Förbundens Ombudsmän.

## Chapter 5: The Scandianvian Defence Union.

1. The following chapters dealing with the Scandinavian Defence Union are, among others, based on material from the Swedish Foreign Office which until recently have been inaccessible. For that reason there was still very little known about the official Swedish points of view and incentives. The articles of Wahlbäck (1973 and 1976) are not based on Foreign Office material. In the autumn of 1984, after several rejected requests, I got finally permission from the Chief of the Foreign Office Archives, prof. Carlgren, for research. A first result was published in the Dutch historical magazine *Spiegel Historiae* of October 1986. "De mislukking van de Scandinavische Defensie Unie". Later the Swedish historian Kersti Blidberg also published an article dealing with the same subject which was roughly based on the same sources. Her point of departure however is different. See "*Just good friend. Nordic Social Democracy and Security policy 1945-1950*" (1987) in *FHFS notat*. See for an overall view of publications on SDU and Cold War in Scandinavia: Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984.

2. ASFO. HP Vol. 1043. Memorandum of plans concerning the building of a Northern Defence Union, January 10 1947.

See for the plans for a Swedish-Finnish defence union: Carlgren, 1981. See also 6.5.

3. ASDA. SAMAK F: xxvi: c: 4 1945 - 1946. Memorandum of 1945? (a questionmark with a pencil was added) discussed at the SAMAK meeting of 13-14 July 1945 in Stockholm.

4. *Dansk Sikkerhetspolitik 1948 - 1966*. Vol. I Copenhagen 1968 p. 21-22.

5. See for those talks: Nevakivi "Scandinavian talks on military cooperation in 1946-1947: A prelude to the Decisions of 1948-1949 in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1984, No. 3. pp. 165-175. See also Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia,

NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.

6. See Wergeland, 1914, p. 278.

7. For a survey of the Norwegian foreign policy Riste, 1985 and Riste in: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No. 2;  
Pharo, H. "The Cold War in Norwegian and International Historical Research" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1985, Vol. 10 nr. 3. pp.163-189;  
Pharo, H. "Bridgebuilding and Reconstruction. Norway faces the Marshall plan" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1976 No. 1: pp. 125-153 and  
Röhne in: *FHFS notat*, 1986, No. 7.

8. Skodvin, 1971, p. 63. Skodvin pays attention to the Norwegian going over to the West from pp. 62 to 89.

In the archives of the Swedish Foreign Office I did not find Beck-Friis "sensational reports" which Undén mentioned in his diary.

Lange's fear for the international developments dates from at least April 1946 when he informed Undén that he had information from the US that pointed to the danger of an imminent war. See Möller, 1986, p.291.

9. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp. 1-3.  
See for Beck-Friis' report on his meeting with Collier ASFO. HP Vol. 43 Letter to Undén February 6 1948.

10. TEA. Vol. 354 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.8-9. We will return to the Swedish view on the Norwegian desertion in Chapter 7.5.

11. UPD. 8-02-1948.

12. TEA. Vol. 365 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, pp. 8-9.

13. ASDA. SAP. A: /A : 19 - 22 . Partistyrelsens Protokoll 1939-1950, April 6 1948.

14. ASFO. HP 44. Memorandum of Swedish neutrality by Undén, April 2 1948.

15. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.10-11.

16. Ibidem. p.11 note 1. According to the author (prof. Carlgren Chief FO Archives Stockholm ) there are no documents in the archives of the Swedish Foreign Office that deal with the eventual discussions.

17. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.

Ibidem. Vol. 44 Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.

18. ADFO. Stockholm Embassy. G.A. Box 2, no. 4516/874, October 28 1948. Memorandum of a conversation with Undén by Teixeira de Mattos, Dutch ambassador in Stockholm

See also FRUS, Vol. 4, 1949, p. 79 (Febr. 8).

19. UPD. 30-10-1948. See for the conditions of such a regional defense pact Chapter 1.2.

20. ASFO. HP Vol. 44 Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.

21. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.
22. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Telegram by Undén to all ambassadors, May 18 1948.
23. ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppensprotokoll 1947- 1952 A ii a: 5. January 20 1949.
24. ARAB. ASDP Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppensprotokoll 1947 1952. A ii a: 5. January 11, 1949.
25. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Åström, November 4 1948.  
I realize that some of the sources in this chapter are from a later date than May 1948. But as the Swedes stuck to the point of view they had adopted in May 1948, I see no reason not to use those sources.  
See also chapter 7.2.
26. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Åström, November 4 1948.  
See also FRUS, Vol. 4. 1948 p. 21. The Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, General Jung, noted: "Denmark is actually a burden. Political question. Isolating extraordinary precarious situation. Would not want to be in the place of the political leadership". ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Utrikesnämnden( Foreign Committee), January 17 1949. See also Chapter 7.2.
27. See chapter 6.6, "The Finnish Factor".
28. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 -1949, p. 11.
29. It is in fact one of the first indications that there were great differences of opinion within the Norwegian Social Democratic Party (DNA).
30. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, May 8 1948. See also UPD. 3-05-1948.
31. See for an extensive survey of the negotiations: Skodvin, 1971, pp. 123-284. In this paragraph (5.5) I will follow the negotiations from the beginning to the end but will, because of the starting point of this dissertation, mainly pay attention to the attitude of Sweden. Of course, one must bear in mind that the political pressure, the arms question, the Soviet Union etc, played their role in the negotiations and that those factors influenced the meetings but for the sake of overview I have chosen to deal with this items in separate paragraphs.
32. UPD. 9-05-1948.
33. UPD. 9-05-1948.
34. TEA. Vol. 365 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 -1949, p.14.
35. UPD. 10-05-1948.
36. TEA. Vol. 365 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 -1949, p.14.
37. UPD. 15-05-1948. See also TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949. pp.15-16.

38. TEA. Vol. 354. VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.16-17.
39. ASFO. HP Vol. 983 Memorandum of a conversation with Lange and Rasmussen by Undén, June 17 1948.  
See also TEA. Vol. 365 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, p. 19.  
and ASFO. HP Vol. 984 file xxviii Memorandum of September 11 1948.
40. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 file xxviii Memorandum (not signed) of September 1948.
41. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 23.
42. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.23-24.
43. TEA. Vol. 363 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, pp. 24-25.  
and ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Letter Beck-Friis to Erlander, October 16 1948.
44. TEA. Vol. 365. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp. 36-42. Quotations from p. 37 and 42. For the complete report of the SDU: Riksarkivet Stockholm. Deposition Partiledarna. Fritiof Domö. See also Skodvin, 1971, pp.179-182.
45. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 von Dardel to Erlander, Oct. 1 1948.  
See also TEA. F VIII : 1. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 25.
46. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Letter of Boheman (Washington) to cabinetsecretary H. Beck-Friis. October 15 1948.  
See for the "pre-avis" also: ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén, October 5 1948. Ibidem October 6 1948.  
ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Letter of Häggelöf to Erlander October 21 1948. Ibidem Memorandum of a conversation with the Danish ambassador in London, Reventlov, by Undén, October 26 1948.  
See for the (non) coordination on State Department and Foreign Office and between this American and English department also Chapter 6.3.
47. ASFO. HP Vol. 44 Memorandum of a conversation with Marshall by Undén, October 14 1948.
48. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum of a conversation with Marshall in Paris by Undén, October 14 1948.
49. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, p. 27.
50. ANFO. Dossier 38.3/3: Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind I. Umin/GD 21/11-48 J.nr. 037040 UD Memorandum of a conversation with Undén by Lange, November 20 1948.
51. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Letter of Beck-Friis to Erlander, October 16 1948.
52. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, p. 28.
53. TEA. Vol. 365.F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.28-29.
54. See for the Russian attitude and the arms question: Chapter 6.5 and 6.2.

55. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange in Paris, November 20 1948 and ibidem of a conversation with Lange and Rasmussen in Paris, November 26 1948.  
ANFO. Dossier 38.3/3: Nordisk militært samarbeid. Umin/GD 21/11-48 J.nr. 037040 UD Memorandum by Lange of a conversation with Undén, November 20 1948.
56. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, pp. 22-23. See also Erlander 1973, pp. 382-383. UPD.21-12-1948.
57. ANFO. Dossier 38.3/3: Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind III. Um/GD 12/1/49 Jr. nr. 001232 UD Memorandum by Lange of a conversation with Bay, January 12 1949.
58. TEA. Vol. 365 F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, p. 45. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Telegram Hägglöf to Stockholm Jan. 10 1949. See also UPD. 29-12-1948.
59. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 43.
60. UPD. 27-12-1948.
61. See for literature on Karlstad for example: Skodvin, 1971, pp. 235-245; Krister Wahlbäck, "Norden och blockuppdelningen 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, Häfte B 1973, pp. 4-92; Möller, 1986, pp. 341-344 and Erlander, 1973, pp. 383-385.
62. Furthermore his own party (DNA) would have been split if he had acted otherwise. A catastrophe that never would have been accepted by Gerhardsen.
63. See also Pharo, H "Det nortatlantiske samarbeid og Norge, 1948-1949. Noen refleksjoner over Foreign Relations of the United States, bind III 1948, bind IV 1949" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1976, pp. 859-894. Also the Canadian ambassador in Denmark, Henry Laureys jumped to a similar conclusion: "By calling the Karlstad meeting she would be able to demonstrate finally to the Norwegian people if no agreement resulted that every avenue of Scandinavian cooperation had been fully explored before Norway should be instrumental in severing the traditional Scandinavian link in favour of an alliance with the West." PAC. RG 25 G2 Acc. 84-85/268. Box 314. File 6143 -A-40 Part 1. Laureys to Secretary of State, January 13 1949. 7272 40. 36-10.
64. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum by Undén of the meeting of Scandinavian ministers in Karlstad, January 5 and 6 1949.
65. Erlander, 1973, p. 384.
66. See Eriksen-Skodvin, "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511. See also Lundestad, 1980, pp. 292-295.
67. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p.25-26. Matthews to Secretary of State, January 14 1949.
68. TEA. Vol. 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 49. It was

added that Matthews did his statement probably in order to exercise pressure on Sweden.

69. Ibidem, p. 49-50. See also ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Utrikesnämnden January 21 1949.

70. See for a survey of those conferences Skodvin, 1971, pp. 265- 287. Erlander, 1973, pp. 385 -397 and Ohlin, 1975, pp. 306 -310.

71. TEA. Vol. 365. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp. 51-54. See also ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Declaration of the Swedish Delegation on a neutral Scandinavian Defence Union. January 24 1949.

72. Erlander in private conversation, March 4 1985. See also Chapter 7.4.

73. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Norsdiskt Försvarsförbund, p.44.

74. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Memorandum by Undén "in February" 1949 of the dinner at Åkerhus, January 28 1949.

75. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Memorandum by Undén "in February" 1949 of the dinner at Åkerhus, January 28 1949.

76. UPD. 1-03-1949.

## Chapter 6: The Scandinavian Defence Union. Some factors and views.

1. HSTL. Box 17, War. Dep. Int. Rev. Intelligence Review, No. 35,10 October 1946, Copy nr.12.

2. HSTL. Box 17. War. Dep. Int. Rev. Intelligence Review, No. 15, 23 May 1946.

3. PAC. DEA. RG 25, G 2 Acc 84-85/268. Box 314. File 6143-A-40 Part 1. Letter Canadian Embassy Moscow to Escott Read, April 5 1949.

4. ANFO. Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind III Doss. 38.3/3: (The document is not numbered) Prebensen to Lange, January 17 1949.  
ASFO. HP Vol. 983, Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the British Ambassador, June 1 1948.

5. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum by Boheman, December 21 1948. See also HP Vol. 986. Utrikesnämnden, Jan. 1 1949 and AHM. Moderata Samlingspartiet. Deposition partiledarna. Fritiof Domö. Memorandum by G. Häggblöf, January 27 1949.

For the Atomic Energy Commission see Grethe Værnø, "Norge og A-pakten 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320 (p.320 note 21)  
In the Intelligence Report of 1946 (March 21) attention was already paid to the Swedish Uranium: HSTL. Box. 15 , War Department.

6.PRO. FO 188/1566. N 6731/78/42 Foreign relations Great Britain -Sweden. Hankey to Jerram, June 1st 1946.



PRO. FO 371/77394. Scandinavian Defence and the Atlantic Pact. January 17 1949 by Hankey.

About two weeks later, on February 4 1949 Hankey told Hägglöf that he personally did not like the idea of Sweden joining Nato (it was after the SDU failure) because the Pact would in that case move too closely to the Soviet borders. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Memorandum by Hägglöf of a conversation with Hankey.

7.PRO. FO 115/4435. Ministry of Defence to Joint Services Mission, February 10 1949. Top Secret. Replies prepared by the British Chiefs of Staff.

The whole text of this important document reads as follows:

"Question 1: What strategic role is anticipated for Scandinavia in the event of war?

Answer (a) To deny its territory to the enemy

(b) To grant to the allies the use of Greenland and the right of entry to the Faroes should this be necessary

Question 2: Would our strategic objects be accomplished by Scandinavian non belligerence or neutrality?

Answer: The major strategic role of Scandinavia is to deny its territory to the enemy. This role would be fulfilled if Scandinavia could achieve non-belligerence or neutrality. On the other hand, our requirements for the use of bases in Greenland and the right of entry into the Faroes will not be met unless Scandinavian non-belligerence or neutrality excludes its overseas territories.

Furthermore, if Scandinavia is attacked it would not be able to maintain its territorial integrity unless

(a) the enemy are being held in Western Europe, and

(b) the three Scandinavian countries have coordinated their defence plans in peace and have received assistance in equipment and training from the Western powers.

Apart from this however it, it is difficult to imagine that the neutrality is likely to be respected by either party

Question 3: In the light of the above answers, what are the relative advantages to the North Atlantic Powers of:

(a) Norwegian and Danish membership in the North Atlantic Pact with a neutral Sweden, unwilling to contribute in any way to the defence of Norway or Denmark unless it is itself attacked?

(b) Scandinavian Defence Pact committing Norway, Sweden and Denmark to go to war in the event of an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of any of them, but precluding any association either by Treaty or through military conversations with the parties to the North Atlantic Pact?

Answer: On balance the Scandinavian Defence Pact appears, from the military point of view, to have certain advantages over Norway and Denmark joining the Atlantic Pact to the exclusion of Sweden. We realize that the political considerations might outweigh the military considerations, which are not very strong either way, but we must emphasise that the provision of direct military

or air assistance by the Western Union Powers in war is military unjustifiable.

(a) Norwegian and Danish membership in North Atlantic Pact.

Advantages

The advantages of this course are:

- (a) It would meet our strategic requirements in Greenland and the Faroes
- (b) The likelihood of Iceland joining the Atlantic Pact would be increased
- (c) In war the Norwegian and Danish Merchant Navy would be at the service of the Allies
- (d) There is some chance that Sweden, feeling her isolation would make independent arrangements with Norway and Denmark.

Disadvantages:

Disadvantages of this course are:

- (a) We should be under great pressure to give Norway and Denmark appreciable military equipment which could only be at the expense of Western Union. Furthermore, the provision of assistance would not help us in war, as without Sweden, the resistance of these two countries is bound to be ineffective, however much equipment they have been given.
- (b) In the event of war, there is a serious danger that we should be morally obliged to give direct assistance to Norway. We can ill afford such assistance and we can certainly not give it in sufficient strength to prevent that country from being overrun.

(b) Scandinavian Defence Pact

Advantages

Advantages of this course are:

- (a) The combination of the three Scandinavian countries would increase their deterrent power against possible Russian aggression. By coordinating their defence plans the Scandinavian countries would be better able to prolong their defence if attacked.
- (b) The net result might be that the Scandinavian countries would be left out of the initial stages of any future war and if they could maintain their neutrality they would achieve our principal object which is to deny Scandinavia to the enemy.

Disadvantages:

Disadvantages of this course are:

- (a) As already stated there may be difficulties in our occupying Greenland and the Faroes

(b) Iceland may well follow Norway, Denmark and Sweden in such a policy. Should she join the Scandinavian Union, the American occupation of bases in Iceland on the outbreak of war would be a clear *casus belli* for the Scandinavian countries.

(c) Scandinavian defence plans would be drawn up without the assistance, experience and intelligence available from the Western Powers.

(...)

Question 5: How would the situation under question 3(b) above be modified if Iceland were a member of the North Atlantic Pact and a separate arrangement could be made with Denmark covering Greenland?

Answer:

This would remove the principal military objection to a Scandinavian Defence Pact.

Question 6: Any comments on other relevant military considerations?

Answer: It should be made clear to the Scandinavian countries that we have no requirement for bases in Scandinavian home territories in peace and no essential requirements in war. On the other hand, the strategic air offensive which would be materially assisted by Scandinavian participation in the Atlantic Pact would give considerable indirect support to Scandinavia. Other allied operations on sea and in the air would also give considerable indirect support."

An roughly similar document was produced by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff on January 28 1949. See FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV pp. 95-97. Also for the US military lay, with regard to the Scandinavian mainland, the "major strategic interest in the denial to the Russians of air and submarine bases in Scandinavia and its island possessions." (p.96).

8. PRO. FO 371/77392. Sweden and the Atlantic Pact by RMA Hankey, Jan. 12 1949.

9. PRO. FO 371/77392. Top secret. No name, no signature, not dated (Probably January 1949.)

10. ANFO. Doss 38.3./3: Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind 1. J. nr. 020166-UD Prebensen to Lange, June 23 1948. See also ANFO. Doss. 38.3./2: Nordisk försvarsförbund J. nr. 018454 - UD Bergersen to Lange, May 27 1948.

11. PRO. FO 371/77394 Scandinavian defence and the Atlantic Pact by RMA Hankey, 17th January 1949.

12. See Knut Eriksen, "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, No. 2, pp. 261-302. See also Lundestad, 1980, p.282 f.f.

13. PRO. FO 371/77394 Scandinavian defence and the Atlantic Pact by RMA Hankey, 17th January 1949.

14. Lundestad, 1980, pp. 283-4. Lundestad mentions also that it was realized that Sweden would not accept the Hankey plan. Lundestad refers to a telegram from Lange to the Norwegian Embassy in London of October 19, 1948. Hankey's answer to Lange was received through ambassador Prebensen. See also Knut Eriksen, "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, No.2, pp. 261-302.

15. PRO. FO 371/77394 Scandinavian defence and the Atlantic Pact by RMA Hankey, 17th January 1949. Underlining in original text.

16. Quoted from Lundestad, 1980, p.253. See for the "graduated membership" pp. 246-248.

17. After the Versailles Treaty (1920) Spitzbergen (Svalbard) became Norwegian territory but it was by treaty demilitarised area. The Spitzbergen crisis fell between 1944-46 when Moscow demanded joint Soviet Norwegian control over the island which was declined. Spitzbergen had a considerable colony of Russian miners. At on the onset of the Cold War it was feared that Stalin should use the existence of that miners colony as a pretext to occupy Spitzbergen in order to guard their safety. When Norway entered the NATO in 1949, Spitzbergen was also included. See Tamnes in: *FHFS notat*, 1987, No. 4.

18. The term "stepping stones" is from George Kennan. See FRUS, Vol. III, 1948. Memorandum of the Third Meeting of the Working Group, 2.9.1948. pp. 226-227.

Already on November 25 1947 mentioned NSC 2/1 the absolute necessity of obtaining bases on Greenland, Iceland and the Azores. See Wiebes/Zeeman, 1983, p. 250, note 47.

19. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV. pp. 98-99.

20. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV. p. 621.

Eriksen and Skodvin mention that the USA with regard to Denmark put special emphasis on the strategic importance of Greenland. "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.

21. UPD. 1-3-1949. For the Americans not wanting to leave Greenland see: ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Dardel to Undén, 23.2.1949. Report of a conversation with Hedtoft. Hedtoft had told Dardel, Swedish Ambassador in Copenhagen, that the Americans had threatened to stay in Greenland also when the Danes refused to join the Atlantic Pact.

22. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Dardel to Undén, 28.2.1949. I have not been able to check this information in the archives of the Danish Foreign Office. In a letter from the Udenrigsministeriet (the Danish Foreign Office) of Febr. 6 1985, I was promised admittance to its archives. After having arrived in Copenhagen (from Stockholm) I only was allowed to see some maps with clips from newspapers. Protests and referring to their consent of Febr. 6 had no effect. Before they gave me "admittance" they had consulted the chief of the archives of the Swedish Foreign Office. Copenhagen was informed by Stockholm that I had access to their archives. The reason for the Danish refusal therefore remains a secret until today.

23. This view was put forward in many documents: ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Letter Boheman to Erlander, October 28 1948. Boheman was quite convinced that the USA especially was out after Greenland and would take Denmark "into the bargain."

ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Boheman and Hägglöf in the Foreign Committee, January 21 1949.

ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Boheman to Swedish Foreign Office, November 28 1948.

ASFO. HP Vol. 987. Letter Boheman to Undén, Febr. 26 1948.

ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Memorandum by Undén of a report of Hägglöf, London, Febr. 26 1949.

ASFO. HP Vol. 985, Memorandum by Boheman on the Atlantic Pact, December 21 1948.

ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Hägglöf to Undén. Report of a conversation with Hankey. June 30 1949. Hankey confirmed in retrospect that the English were afraid that the Swedes would draw Norway and Denmark in to a neutral group.

ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Tel. Boheman to Swedish Foreign Office, Jan. 12 1949.

ASFO. HP Vol. 985, Tel. Hägglöf to Swedish Foreign Office, Jan. 13 1949.

ASFO. HP Vol. 632. Boheman to Beck-Friis. FO. Stockholm, December 12 1948.

Also Undén told the members of the Social Democratic Party that London and Washington were afraid that Sweden should draw Norway and Denmark into isolation. He further stated that the British had been more tolerant than the Americans. ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppens protokoll 1947 - 1952. A II a:5, Febr. 1 1949.

Also Cumming said in November 1948 that the US was not interested in Denmark proper but in Greenland. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Memorandum by Tord Bonde of a conversation with Cumming, November 26 1948.

24. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Boheman to Secretary Beck-Friis. November 11 1948. Boheman got that impression during a talk with the Dutch Foreign Minister van Kleffens. This view was confirmed by the Swedish minister in Paris, Westman. See ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Tel. Westman to Swedish Foreign Office, January 14 1949. See also December 12 1948. Westman to Dahlman, FO. Stockholm.

The view of France and the other Brussels Pact countries was rather ambiguous: They wanted as many countries as possible in the Atlantic Pact but at the other side they were not prepared to share the available weapons.

In June 1948, Paris wanted Sweden to be a member and ambassador Puaux called neutrality "a rather naive hope." TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 18.

25. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Undén of his visit to Copenhagen, November 6 and 7 1948, November 11 1948.

An unknown commentator has provided the text with questionmarks, exclamationmarks and underlinings. I have given the questionmarks (which appeared most) in the text as [?]. My impression was that the anonymous commentator absolutely disagreed with Undén.

26. This quotation was of the anonymous commentator thickly underlined and provided with exclamation- and questionmarks. The word "preferably" (helst) was placed between two exclamationmarks.

27. For Marshall's quote see: Lundestad 1977, p. 323.

For Bevin: PRO. FO 371/7394, N186 a/1091/636, February 21 1949. Bevin to Embassy Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo. Bevin's view dated from at least

the Conference in Paris of March 1949 and had not changed since that meeting: PRO. FO 371/77394. Minutes Febr. 12 1949.

28. UPD. 18-6-1948 and 29-11-1948.

29. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Tel. Boheman to FO. Stockholm, May 21 1948.

30. UPD. 7-06-1948.

ASFO. HP Vol. 983. Tel. 42 Boheman to Swedish Foreign Office (June 5 or 6 1948. Also ASFO. HP Vol. 242. Tel. Boheman to Swedish Foreign Office June 5 1948.

31. For the "*pré-avis*" see also Chapter 5.5.

32. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Rasmussen and Lange in Paris, October 6 1948.  
Ibidem October 6 1948.

See also TEA. F VIII:1 p.26 and 27 and Skodvin, 1971, pp.182-187.

Also Hickerson and Sir Orme Sargent had declared that they did not want to exercise pressure: ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Rasmussen in Paris, Oct. 6 1948.

Sargent had also told the Norwegian ambassador Prebensen that both England and the USA would like to see the SDU negotiations finished before the end of the year.

33. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Report Hägglöf to Erlander of a conversation with Bevin, October 21 1948. Also TEA. F: VIII:1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949. p. 27.

Ibidem Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Svenningsen (Danish ambassador in Stockholm), October 26 1948.

See for the Stockholm agreement Chapter 5.5.

34. ANFO. UD 38.3/3: Nordisk militært samarbeid Bind II. J. 031054. Memorandum by Lange of a conversation with Marshall.

35. ASFO. HP Vol. Letter Johan Beck-Friis to Erlander, October 16 1948 and UPD. 28-12-1948.

36. For Marshall's quote see: Lundestad, 1977, p. 323. For Boheman's report ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Letter Boheman to secretary Beck-Friis, October 15 1948. Also Lovett (Under secretary of State) was present at this meeting. Boheman described him as "calm".

37. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Letter Boheman to Beck-Friis. October 15 1948.

38. FRUS, 1948, Vol. III p. 296. Matthews to Secretary of State, Nov. 26 1948.

39. Erlander in private conversation, March 4 1985.

40. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Matthews, June 3 1948. See also ASFO. HP Vol.983 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Matthews, June 3 1948.

Matthews was an ardent and early adversary of neutrality and already in February explained to the Secretary of State "the basic fallacies of Swedish

- thinking.": FRUS, 1948, Vol. III pp.23-24. Matthews to Secretary of State. Febr. 16 1948.
41. ADFO. AA Stockholm. GA Box 2. 1446/307, March 19 1948. Texeira to Foreign Minister.
42. ASFO. HP Vol. 621. Memorandum by Thorsing of a conversation with Cumming, July 8 1948.  
Also: ADFO. AA Stockholm. G.A. Box 2 No. 4516/874 October 28, 1948 and No. 2640/522, June 8 1948. Matthews showed the Dutch minister the cable he had sent to State Department with regard to his conversation with Undén.
43. UPD. 18-11-1947. Undén heard Cumming's view via his secretary Edelstam.
44. UPD.10-07-1948.
45. PRO. FO 371/71455, N 13443. Tel. 657 Stockholm to Foreign Office. December 18 1948.
46. UPA. L 108 Letter Boheman to Undén. Nov. 5 1948.  
TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, pp.55 and 19-20.
47. PAC. DEA file 69 (s) Canadian Embassy Washington to LP Pearson, Under Secretary of State, Ottawa. Memorandum of a conversation with Cumming in Washington, May 13 1948.
48. For Stevens see ASFO. HP Vol. 620. Sohlman (Moscow) to Beck-Friis. Memorandum of a conversation with admiral Stevens, April 6 1948. For Texeira see ADFO. AA Stockholm GA Box 496 913.13 Texeira to For.Min. The Hague, Febr 5 1949 and box 469 I 1945-1949 912.2 Zweden Buitenland No.2037 April 29 1948.
49. FRUS, 1948, Vol. III, p.98.
50. See Knut Eriksen "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, No. 2, pp. 261-302.
51. ADFO. AA Stockholm. GA Box 496 913-13 No. 560/94. Texeira to the Hague, Febr. 5 1949.
52. Lundestad, 1980, p. 221.
53. FRUS, 1949, Vol. V p. 5 Matthews to the Acting Secretary of State, January 4 1949. A note (3) is added by the editor to this telegram of Matthews and refers to Telegram 10 of January 6 (not printed in FRUS) which reads that State had no intention of approaching Sweden although State at the same time had indicated to Oslo and Copenhagen "that it had no objections to their discussing the subject with Sweden."
54. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Embassy Washington to Utrikesdepartementet Stockholm. Drew Pearson at 6.00 PM over WMAL (Washington) and the ABC Network. January 23 1949.

55. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange in Paris, November 20 1948. For Lange's memorandum ANFO. Doss.38./3: Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind III Jr.nr. 037040 UD, November 20 1948.

56. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange and Rasmussen in Paris, November 26, 1948. Undén reports here also his conversation with Marshall.

See for Lange's memorandum ANFO. Bind III Doss. 38.3/3: Nordisk militært Samarbeid. J. nr. 037040 UD November 20 1948.

For the Vandenberg Resolution see FRUS, 1948, Vol. III pp.135 -136.

57. See for instance ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppensprotokoll 1947-1952 A II a:5, January 11 1949.

Ibidem January 25 1949.

ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Undén to Boheman, 2-12-1948.

ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the British ambassador, December 18 1948.

58. Erlander, 1973, p. 389.

59. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Undén to Boheman. December 12 1948.

60. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis of a conversation with Matthews, November 26 1948.

For Matthews démarche and reactions also: TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949. pp 31-36.

61. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, 26-11-1948. p. 19.

62. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Letter Sven Dahlman (Swed. FO) to Swedish Embassy in Ottawa. December 3 1948.

63. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Memorandum by Tord Bonde of a conversation with Cumming, 26-11-1948.

Ibidem. Letter of Hans Beck-Friis to Boheman, December 3 1948.

64. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Undén to Boheman, December 2 1948.

TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp. 32-33.

65. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Telegram Boheman to Foreign Office, Stockholm, December 7 1948.

Hickerson should tell 30 years later to the Norwegian historian Værnø that he had not been out after Sweden. What he had wanted was that the Swedes should leave Norway and Oslo in peace. See Grethe Værnø "Norge og A-pakten, 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320 (note 22).

66. ASFO. HP Vol. 632. Boheman to Hans Beck-Friis, December 12 1948 and ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Boheman to Hans Beck Friis, November 11 1948.

67. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, November 26 1948.



68. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Letter Gunnar Hägglöf to Dahlman, FO Stockholm, December 14 1948.
69. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the British Ambassador, December 18 1948.  
See also Chapter 7.3.
70. Ibidem.
71. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.
72. PRO. FO 115/4435. Min. of Defence to Joint Services Missions, February 10 1949. Top Secret.
73. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum by Undén of the Karlstad meeting 5-6 January 1949, January 10 1949.
74. ASFO. HP Vol.988. Memorandum by Undén of the Karlstad meeting, 5-6 January 1949, January 10 1948.
75. ASFO. HP Vol. 987. Report by the naval attaché to the Chief of Defence Staff. Foreign Department, G Tham of a conversation with Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence, Captain Baker Crosswell. Not dated, probably between 10 and 14 February 1949.  
Also Boheman had during his stay as ambassador in London got the impression that the difficulties with regard to deliveries had "at least partly a political background." ASFO. HP Vol. 983. Letter Boheman to Undén, June 18 1948.  
Also in a letter from Sven Dahlman (Foreign Office Stockholm) to the Swedish embassies in London, Paris, Oslo and Copenhagen (December 7 1949: ASFO. HP Vol. 989) it is stated that the English Admiralty wanted an effective support for Sweden.
76. UPD. 19-01-1949.
77. Geir Lundestad "Det nordatlantiske samarbeid og Norge, 1948-1949" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 321-329.
78. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Utrikesnämnden (Foreign Committee) January 21 1949. Hägglöf explains that the Foreign Office often refers to the State Department with regard to weapon deliveries.
79. PRO. FO 371/77725, N 991/1192/42G. Febr. 25 1949. Bateman to Farquhar. Top Secret.
80. PRO. FO 371/77394, N 186a/1091/63G. February 21 1949. Bevin to British Embassies in Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm. Top Secret.
81. PRO. FO 371/77394, Farquhar to Bateman, FO 24th February 1949. Top Secret and Personal.  
There are indeed no indications that Farquhar personally tried to exercise on Sweden. In June 1948 he said to Undén that England not wanted to use pressure and that which had happened earlier had been nothing more "an

exchange of thoughts." TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.21.

82. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. May 21 1948. Boheman to Undén.

83. ASFO. HP Vol. 983. Letter Boheman to Undén. June 18 1948.

84. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum of a refusal of Great Britain and US to furnish weapon export licenses, December 6 1948. According to the memorandum this was the first time that Great Britain refused to give an export license.

85. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Hauge, June 1 1949.

86. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Letter Hägglöf to Undén, June 30 1949.

87. PRO. FO 115/4367 Scandinavian Defense. G 50/37/48 Top Secret. Supply to Sweden of Vampire Aircraft. 30 September, 1948. See also Knut Eriksen "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, No. 2, pp. 261-302. The USA tried to prevent the supply of the Vampires. Hickerson: "Why the hell should we spend money to rearm Brussels Pact countries when they are selling jets to neutrals." See also Eriksen's view on pressure in the above mentioned article: pp. 294 and 296.

At another place however it seems that Eriksen is more inclined to call the Anglo-American pressure "diplomatic criticism".

For the Vampire planes see also Krister Wahlbäck "Norden och blockuppdelningen 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, Häfte B 1973, pp. 4-92.

See also Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp. 437-511.

88. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp. 437-511.

89. Ibidem. Also PAC. RG 25 G 2 Acc 84-85/268 Box 314, File 6143-A-40 Part 1. Secret and Personal. Canadian Embassy Moscow (JW Holmes) to Escott Reid. Assistant Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, February 17 1949.

90. See Wiebes-Zeeman "The Pentagon negotiations. March 1948: the launching of the North Atlantic Treaty" in: *International Affairs*, 1983, Vol. 59, No. 3 pp. 351-363.

91. Quoted from Lundestad, 1980, p. 256.

92. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV, p. 71.

93. Værnø, "Norge og A-pakten, 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320.

94. That close friendship did not imply that they always agreed with each other in all political issues. See D. Mayers "Soviet war aims and the Great Alliance: George Kennan's Views 1944-1946" in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1986, Vol. 21 pp. 57-79.

95. Quoted from Lundestad, 1980, p.169. See for Kennan's views also pp. 173-193.
96. ASFO. HP Vol 44 Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Marshall in Paris, October 14 1948.
97. See Grethe Værnø "Norge og A-pakten, 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320.
98. Lundestad, 1980, p.271.
99. Grethe Værnø, "Norge og A-pakten, 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320 ( note 22).
100. Lundestad, 1980, p. 298. See also Chapter 7.1.
101. See Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511. For the bases policy see Chapter 6.5.
102. Möller, 1986, pp. 326 and 343. For Wigforss see also UPD. 20-01-1949.
103. Doubtful about or plainly against a SDU were Wallentheim, Ollson, Lindström, Jacobson, Munkedal, Persson, Branting, Hall, Forslund, Karlsson, Lindqvist and Paulsson. Edberg, Elovsson and Hallén had a vague sympathy for an association with the West. TEA. FVIII: 1. Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 36 (21.01.1949). See also p. 15 (3.11.1948) and 16, 17 and 18 (9.11.1948). See also UPD. 20-01-1949.  
See also ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppsprotokoll 1947 -1952. A II a : 5. January 11 1949 and January 20 1949.  
The majority however supported the governmental line.  
It seems that Undén had little appreciation for defence minister Vougt. Vougt was offered the post of ambassador to Argentina (during the SDU talks!) but refused to leave Swedish politics. Undén noted " He does not seem to have much idea about his position within the party." UPD. 27-02-1948. For another indication: UPD. 26 and 27-02-1946. The answer to all this is probably that Vougt was compromised by his writings during the war and hence no asset to the SAP government.  
Vougt was offered the post of defence minister by Per Albin Hansson who at the same time hoped that Vougt would not accept.  
Also Wigforss thought that he should be left out. See Möller, 1986, p 225.
104. UPD. 9-11-1948.
105. Tingsten, 1963, p. 187 See for discussions in the SPD also Erlander, 1973, pp. 396-397; Misgeld, 1984, pp. 164-165 and Forser, 1972, pp. 34-37.
106. See for the anonymous editorials (also dates) Barry Holmström "Realism, moralism och neutralitetspolitik. Östen Undén som anonym ledarskribent" in: *Statsvetenskapligt Tidskrift*, 1981 No. 2, pp. 77-91. Holmström uses "Willers bibliography" (i.e. Willers Uno. *Bibliografi över Östen Undéns tryckta vetenskapliga och politiska skrifter 1906-1966*. (1966)) with reference to Undén's anonymous editorials.  
In Undén's private archives at the Royal Library in Stockholm (L 108) a few

articles are refereed to which are not taken up in the above mentioned bibliography: One about the United Nations. MT July (no date) 1946.

Six concern the SDU: MT 15.04.1948; 30.04.1948; 7.09.1948; 28.10.1948; 19.12.1949 and 18.01.1949.

See for (not "Undénian") MT editorials for instance 11.09.1948; 16.11.1948; 23.01.1949; 14.01.1949; 18.01.1949; 25.01.1949; 26.01.1949; 29.01.1949; 31.01.1949; 1.02.1949 and 5.02.1949.

107. ASDA. "Bilagor till Partistyreliens protokoll 1948-1951," A:I:b:20 Bil. PS Protokoll 18.01.1948 nr.5

*Arbetet* was the other soc.democratic daily newspaper which I researched. See for editorials on the SDU for exempel: 29.01.1949; 30.01.1949; 25.02.1948; 28.02.1948; 5.04.1949; 8.05.1949; 8.01.1949; 15.01.1949; 25.01.1949; 28.01.1949 and 1.02.1949.

108. See for instance UPD. 17-12-1947; 18-12-1947; 8-01-1948; 25-01-1948; 11-12-1945; 17-12-1945; 9-01-1946; 11-01.-946; 8-02-1946; 4-02-1948; 7-02-1948; 5-04-1949.

109. Ohlin, 1975, p. 314.

110. AF. Folkpartiet Protokoll 1949. Not dated, not numbered. Probably middle of May 1948 . The election tactics were discussed in this document.

111. A.F Folkpartiet Protokoll 1948. "Utkast till Folkpartiets Valmanifest 1948." (probably March or April 1948).

*Ibidem* 1949, Diskussionen Förtroenderådet, not dated. The year 1849 cannot be correct and must be 1948.

112. AF. Folkpartiet Protokoll 1949. Förtroenderådet Diskussionen nr. 6 Not dated. Probably May 1948.

113. UPD. 4-05-1948. See also 5-05-1948. Erlander mentions the case in TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p.5 (6-05-1948)

114. ARAB. Partistyreliens Protokoll SAP Microfilm nr.6 A:/:A: 19-22 Partistyreliens Protokoll 1939 - 1950, September 22, 1948

Erlander did then not specifically refer the SDU but to the economy of Sweden. Ohlin would even accept a proposal that would be "perilous" for the nation's economy.

In his Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund (TEA. F VIII:1) p. 53; 15.03.1949) he commented a speech of Ohlin for the Danish radio as "Mendacious, insincere and bloody rotten in a way I almost thought was impossible."

115. For Erlander's confirmance see ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppensprotokoll 1947 - 1952. A II a:5 January 25 1949.

Also the conservative leader Domö confirms that Ohlin's party supported the government's point of view. AHM. Moderata Samlingspartiets Deposition. Partiledarna. Fritiof Domö : 13, Utrikesutskott 25-05-1948.

See also Ohlin, 1975, pp. 305, 310 and 311.

116. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Utrikesnämnden, 27.01.1949.

117. AF. Riksdagsgruppensprotokoll January 20, 26 and February 1 1949. Hardly any information is given: just how many members were present, how many took part in the debate but no arguments. The minutes of the Riksdag-fractions are extremely brief and -I would say- "provincial" in their outlook. Very little or no attention is paid (here is referred to the period 1945-1949) to foreign affairs; there is more attention to agricultural prices and flowers that were sent for one or another occasion to a FP member. The archives of Centerpartiet left a similar - may be even stronger - impression of "provincialism".

118. AF. Protokoll 1949. Diskussionsprotokoll från Förtroenderådets sammanträde, May 22 1949.

119. TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 41 (31.01.1949) See for Erlander's view on Ohlin's "West orientation" also 1974, p. 112.

120. Håstad, 1955, p. 54. Håstad refers to a Gallup poll of the spring of 1948. Erlander, 1974, p. 111.

121. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 45 (2.02.49),

122. PAC. RG 25 G 2. Acc 84-85/268 Box 314. File 6143 - A - 40 Part 1. Moscow embassy to Escott Read, External Affairs, Ottawa, April 5 1949.

123. Tingsten, 1963. p. 181. See also an interview with Tingsten in Svenska Dagbladet of February 26 1972 on this subject.

124. UPD. 26-01-1948. Underlining by Undén.

125. PAC. RG 25 G 2. Acc 84-85/268 Box 314. File 6143 - A - 40 Part 1. Moscow embassy to Escott Read, External Affairs, Ottawa, April 5 1949. It was the American born wife of Heilborn, Adèle, who provided this information. (which was not correct)

126. UPD. 25-01-1948.

127. MT 26.01.1948. DN's editorial board was housed at Tegelbacken in Stockholm.

128. DN 15-08-1948.

129. A reason for that could have been the different views of the editors Bo Enander, Carl-Adam Nycop and Ivar Harrie. See Wrigstad, 1979, pp. 54-55.

The main part of the articles about the cold war was written by Enander. Some were written by editor-in-chief Ivar Harrie. There were two more writers of political editorials: Per Wrigstad and Nils Hallerby. Letter Per Wrigstad to the author, March 1 1983.

See for Expressen's editorials for instance: 27.01.1948; 6.05.1948; 19.03.1948; 12.02.1949; 17.02.1949; 6.04.1949; 7.05.1949; 1.10.1948; 5.10.1948; 13.10.1948; 7.01.1949; 25.01.1949; 31.01.1949.

Expressen was part of the Bonnier concern that also owned DN.

Another important liberal newspaper Stockholms Tidningen (ST) supported the official policy of neutrality. See for instance 5.02.1948; 7.02.1948; 8.02.1948; 2.03.1948; 14.03.1949; 17.01.1949; 21.01.1949; 16.03.1949; 8.05.1948; 31.05.1948.

130. See for instance MT 9.06.1948; 17.04.1949; 27.07.1949; 1.08.1949. For articles which are not mentioned in Willer's bibliography see UPA. L 108: MT 15.04.1948; 30.04.1948; 7.09.1948; 18.01.1949.

131. AHM. Högerpartiets arkiv Bind III : I. "Till Sveriges Folk." (10.08.1948).

132. ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppens Arkiv. Social Demokratiska Riksdagsgruppens protokoll 1947 - 1952. A II a:5 January 27 1949. Erlander reports on the meeting of partileaders on the SDU.

133. AHM. Domö Samling. Protokoll från Högerriksdagsgruppens konfidentiella sammanträde rörande det nordiska försvarsförbundet, Jan. 26 1949.

See also TEA. F VIII : 1. Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p.30 (10.01.1949).

134. Gunnar Heckscher "Nordisk Försvarssamverkan" in *Svensk Tidskrift* 1949 No.39, pp. 606-614.

135. Anderson, 1969, p. 179. Like Ohlin, Anderson pleaded for a "West oriented Swedish foreign policy".

136. UPD. 30-12-1948. Undén refused: "Impossible."

137. Anderson, 1969, p. 180. See for SvD editorials on Atlantic Pact and SDU for instance: 4.03.1948; 17.02.1948; 27.11.1948; 18.03.1948; 26.04.1948; 17.02.1949; 23.04.1948; 9.05.1948; 8.05.1948; 24.04.1949; 6.06.1948; 15.06.1948; 18.01.1949.

Also *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (Höger) supported the official foreign policy. See for instance: 21.05.1948, 27.04.1949; 26.05.1948; 11.09.1948; 26.04.1948; 2.01.1949; 13.01.1949; 31.01.1949.

A few smaller Högerpapers like *Smålands Allehanda* and *Helsingborgs Dagblad* supported the pro Nato line. See Håstad, 1955, *Skrifter utgivna av Utrikespolitiska institutet*. No.10, p. 54.

138. Andra Kammarrens Protokoll, 1948 : 5 p. 40, Febr. 4 1948. See also TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p.9 (25.05.1948).

139. ACB. BF Förtroenderådets Protokoll A II 3. May 21 1948.

See also A I:5 Protokoll vid Riksstämman, June 15 1948 and June 21-21 1949.

For the rest the minutes in this archive breathed an about similar atmosphere of "provincialism" as the FP.

140. ARAB. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppens Arkiv. Socialdemokratiska Riksdagsgruppens Protokoll 1947-1952 A II a:5, January 27 1949. Erlander reports on the attitude of partyleaders.

See also ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Utrikesnämnden 21.01.1949.

141. See for ex. 5.02.1948; 10.01.1949; 24.01.1949; 26.01.1949; 31.01.1949

142. ASKP. Partistyrelsens- och VU utskottets protokoll, 1945. Protokoll Stockholms Kommunistiska Arbetarkommuns års konferens, April 20 1945.

(Sven Linderot). Also Linderot at the 13th Party Congress 1946. See also *Vårt Arbete*, 1947, No. 5, p.5.

143. ASKP. Protokoll vid AU:s och Riksdagruppens sammanträde 1948, October 10. Utkast till resolution, bilaga 1. "Nu kan det vara nog".  
See also *Vår Tid*, 1948, No. 9 p.2.

144. ASKP. Protokoll SKP Partistyrelsens möte , October 23-24 1948. Sven Linderot, p.8 Also at a meeting of Arbetsutskott Jan. 27 1949 support was given to the foreign policy of the SU and the Folk democracies ASKP Protokoll SKP Partistyrelsens möte, Pärm A Arbetsutskottets sammanträde, January 27 1949. Bilaga p.3, nr.6.

145. *Vår Tid*, 1948, nr.9, p.2.

146. See for instance 24.01.1948; 18.03.1948; 8.05.1948; 21.10.1948; 8.01.1949; 14.01.1949; 31.01.1949.

147. Sundell, 1970, p.58.

148. ASKP. Protokoll SKP Partistyrelsens möte, 1948 Oct. 23-24. 1.b.  
See also AF. Folkpartiets Protokoll 1945. Protokoll Folkpartiets Verkställande Utskott 1945 May 9.

149. See Krister Wahlbäck "Norden och blockuppdelningen 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, Häfte B 1973, pp. 4-92.

150. Ibidem (quotation). See also Tingsten, 1963, pp. 188-189.

151. For the "mouth-piece" function see Forser 1972, p. 37.  
For the pertinent articles in *Ny Militär Tidskrift* see for instance 1947, pp.447-448; 1948 pp.87-88 and 301-303; 1949 pp.1 and 88-90.

152. *Tiden*, 1949, pp.625-628. For the quotation on the Soviets: Möller, 1986, p. 309. Möller remarks that if it had been publicly known that Undén had been the author in *Tiden*, Jung should have been forced to leave.(p.310)  
Undén was informed by Sohlman that the Soviets had reacted on Jung's speech because of his high position: TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum of December 10 1949. Also before the Soviets had reacted negatively on Jung. See Jukka Nevakivi "Scandinavian talks on military cooperation in 1946-1947: A prelude to the Decisions of 1948-1949" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1984, No. 3. pp. 165-175.

There were more anonymous writers in *Tiden*. Of an article signed by *Strategos* (1949 pp. 456-464) it was alleged in the Danish newspaper *Information* that it had been written by Vougt and Per Edvin Sköld. According to Erlander it had been general Rosenblad.: ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum bu Undén, Jan. 10 1949. The article read that a sound Swedish foreign policy must be based on realities and not on illusions.

153. Krister Wahlbäck "Norden och blockuppdelningen 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, Häfte B 1973, pp. 4-92.

154. TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum of 21.02.1949 (no name)  
See also Anderson, 1969, p.179 and Tingsten, 1963, p. 188.

155. PRO. FO 371/7415, doc. signed by Wyatt, Wing Commander Air Attaché. May 9 1949.
156. PRO. FO 371/1455, N 13443 Tel. 537. Stockholm to FO, Dec. 18, 1948. ADFO. AA Stockholm GA 1948 Box 2, nt. 4240/813 Texeira to the Hague, October 8 1948. Already earlier, June 2, Texeira had reported on the clear discrepancy between the government and the military who were "strongly and openly West oriented" It was also reported that Vougt had told an English military attaché that the Soviets "on historical grounds" were afraid of Sweden. ADFO. AA Stockholm GA Box 2 nr. 2534/507, June 2, 1948 Texeira to Foreign Minister.
- TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 51 (23.02.-1949).
157. UPD. 31-03-1948.
158. TEA. Vol. 366 F VIII:2 Skandinaviska försvarsproblem. General Swedlund's föredrag i föreningen KHS 9.03.1949.
159. PRO. FO 371/77394 Scandinavian Defence and the Atlantic Pact by RM Hankey, Jan. 17 1949. Häggelöf, the Swedish ambassador, seems to have shared that feeling: Hankey added that he "has lobbied a number of the senior members of the Foreign Office dealing with the Atlantic Pact and also seems to be worried about this aspect.
160. ANFO. Doss.38.3/3" Nordisk militært samarbeid. Bind III Prebensen to Lange, January 17 1949.
161. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.
162. ARAB. Paristyrelsens Protokoll SAP 1939-1950, Rulle 6. A:/A: 19-22, June 18 1945.
163. UPD. 10-06-1948.
164. UPD. 17-09-1948. Sohlman said that also the Italian ambassador in Moscow confirmed that.
165. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange in Paris, November 20 1948.
166. ASFO. HP Vol. 1043. Memorandum concerning plans of establishing a Northern defence union, January 10 1947.  
See also Tom Hetland, "Då Moskva sa nei till Norden. Sovjets syn på Norden og Nato, 1948-1952" in: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No 4.
167. Skodvin, 1971, pp.56-60. Also Jukka Nevakivi "Scandinavian talks on military cooperation in 1946-1947: A prelude to the Decisions of 1948-1949" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1984, No. 3. pp. 165-175.  
ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, Jan 29 1948.  
See also UPD. 29-01-1948. For the meeting with Bevin (March 1948): TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.7.



168. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Utrikesnämnden Jan. 17 1949. See for the Soviet evaluation of the SDU as a kind of Nato instrument also Tom Hetland, "Då Moskva sa nei till Norden. Sovjets syn på Norden og Nato, 1948-1952" in: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No 4.
169. ASFO. HP Vol. 987. Telegram Boheman to FO nr. 38 February 17 1949. Boheman had his information from the Finnish ambassador Jutila who, on his turn, had it from Paujusjka who, according to Jutikala, was a confidant of Stalin.
170. Tom Hetland, "Då Moskva sa nei till Norden. Sovjets syn på Norden og Nato, 1948-1952" in: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No 4.
171. ASFO. HP Vol. 45. Letter Dahlman (at the request of Undén) to Boheman, (March 31 1949).  
Also TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 36.
172. Tom Hetland, "Då Moskva sa nei till Norden. Sovjets syn på Norden og Nato, 1948-1952" in: *FHFS notat*, 1984, No 4.
173. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.  
See also Chapter 5.4.
174. Lundestad, 1980, pp. 247, 250 and 350.
175. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV, p.96. Also Erlander was aware of the importance of denying bases to the Soviets: ASDA. SAMAK F: xxvi:c:5, October 30-31-1948.
176. ASFO. HP Vol. 983. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Lange and Rasmussen, June 17 1948.
177. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 11 ( 7-06-1948).
178. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by Undén, November 11 1948.
179. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Memorandum by Undén of the meeting in Karlstad, Jan. 10 1949.
180. Skodvin, 1971, pp. 333-335. See also Chapter 7.3.
181. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Memorandum by Unén of a conversation with the British ambassador, Febr. 7 1949.
182. TEA. EI:4 Memorandum by Undén, June 30 1950.
183. FRUS, Vol III, 1948, pp.268 -269. Memorandum of Conversation by the acting Secretary of State, October 26 1948.
184. ASFO. HP Vol. 984. Letter Boheman to Beck-Friis Foreign Office Stockholm, October 15 1948.  
For the quotation of Hickerson see: Lundestad, 1980, p. 261.

185. ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Hägglöf to Erlander, October 21 1948. Memorandum of conversation with Bevin. The Finnish argument was also used in a conversation with Sargent and Hankey on October 8 1948: ASFO. HP Vol. 984 Memorandum by G. Hägglöf.

186. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén of a conversation with Marshall in Paris, October 14 1948. Undén used it also in front of the British ambassador: ASFO. HP Vol. 44 June 1 1948.

187. FRUS, 1948, Vol. III p. 233. Report by National Security Council, September 3 1948. NSC 28/1

188. FRUS, 1948, Vol. III p. 165. Fourth meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 8 1948.

With regard to Kennan it must be added that he probably more followed his own conclusions than the Swedish reasoning.

189. Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.

190. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Memorandum of a conversation with Cumming by colonel Tord Bonde of the Swedish defence staff. November 26 1948.

191. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Letter of Helge Hung to the Cabinet and the Chief of the Royal Defense Department, January 21 1949.

See also Eriksen-Skodvin "Storbritannia, NATO og et skandinavisk forbund" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1981, pp.437-511.

192. Erlander in private conversation. March 4 1985. On my question if he could agree with my thesis that "Sweden took Finland into consideration, not for the sake of Finland but for Sweden's own sake" Erlander answered "absolutely" and called it more than once an "excellent typification". Also the Soviets seem to have avoided statements about Finland but according to Erlander there was no "gentleman's agreement" with Moscow on this issue.

Also Sverker Åström said that "Finland did play no role". Åström, at that time secretary at the Foreign Office, was for the rest little informative. He asserted that he remembered very little and if he did he was reluctant to talk because he wanted to use it for his (eventual) memoirs. Åström in private conversation, February 15 1985.

Already before the Soviet-Finnish Treaty of Friendship Undén was inclined to avoid statements about Finland. UPD 1.04.1946 and also afterwards he was not eager to do so, as he told the Russian ambassador Rodionov in June 1950. TEA E I : 4 June 30 1950. Finland and Sweden had many ties but that did not mean that he tried to "influence Finland's policy or give advice to the Finnish government."

See also Krister Wahlbäck "Neutralitet och Moral" in: *Nordisk Kontakt*, 1986, pp. 348-363. Tage Erlander told Wahlbäck that Undén did not want to use the Finnish argument. Undén held the view that it never happened that consideration with another state determined the national foreign policy.

193. See Chapter 5.4.

194. TEA. F III : 2. Cirk. nr.32 Undén on Swedish foreign policy, March 8 1949. In this document he made use of the opportunity to reject Ohlin's "west oriented neutrality" and called the "ideological neutrality" confusing. Neutrality , declared the former lawyer Undén, must be seen in the light of international law and "ideological neutrality" has nothing to do with that.

195. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum of Conversation with the British ambassador by Undén, March 8 1948.

196. UPD. 24-03-1948. Also Erlander was present during this conversation and took the same stand as Undén: TEA. F VIII : 1. Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, pp.2-4. (24.03.1948).

197. ASFO. HP Vol. 44. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.

198. ASFO. HP Vol. 45. Letter Boheman to Undén February 25 1949 and Undén's answer (via Dahlman) of March 3 1949. The letter which is here referred to was a concept but from later telegrams from Boheman it is clear that it was send to him.

199. ASFO. HP Vol. 43. Memorandum of Conversation with the South African ambassador, February 6 1948.

200. Jakobson, 1968, p. 133. See also Wahlbäck, 1967, p.169.

201. TEA. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 9.

202. Answers from Finnish archives are not available either. Access to documents is still denied. Letter from the Finnish Foreign Office to the author, December 12 1984.

## **Chapter 7: Between Oslo and Washington.**

1. See for an extensive survey of Lange's mission for instance Skodvin, 1971, pp. 288-332.

2. FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p. 67. Memorandum of conversation by the Secretary of State. February 7 1949.

3. Quoted from Lundestad, 1980, p. 303. See for the American - Norwegian discussions: ibidem, pp. 296-297, 302-309 and 316-317.

4. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Boheman to Undén. Report of Lange's visit to Washington, February 12 1949.

Already in May 1948 he had reported that the English had "Norway in hand". TEA. Vol. 354 VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.17.

5. TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 42.

6. For the notes see Skodvin, 1971, pp. 333-336. See also Chapter 6.5.

7. See also TEA. Vol. 365 VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 57.

8. See also Lundestad, 1980, pp. 308-309 and Knut Eriksen "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, No. 2, pp. 261-302.
9. PRO. FO 115/4435, Min. of Defence to Joint Services Mission. Febr. 10 1949. Top Secret.  
Also Matthews considered it a victory for the Russians. See FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p. 25-26 Matthews to Secretary of State, Jan. 14 1949.
10. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Beck-Friis to Dahlman, February 21 1949.
11. TEA. Vol. 365 VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp.57-58.
12. See Wahlbäck, 1976, p. 197. See also Grethe Værnø, "Norge og A-pakten, 1948-49" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 303-320. Hickerson told Værnø that Nilsen came to inform if it was true what George Kennan had told some members of the Norwegian Embassy : it was better for the Norwegians not to join the Pact. Sivert wanted to find out if that statement represented the new view of the State Department.  
Compare Lundestad, 1977, pp. 161 and 164.
13. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Tel. 15. Hägglöf to Foreign Office Stockholm, Febr. 14 1949.
14. TEA. F: VIII :1 Vol.365 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 - 1949, p. 58. See also ASFO. HP Vol 987 Tel. 26. Boheman to Foreign Office Stockholm, Febr. 2 1949.  
Afterwards Lange told Boheman that he first and foremost had pleaded for a SDU. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Tel. 30 Boheman to FO Stockholm, Febr. 10 1949.  
Beck-Friis reported from Oslo that Lange had informed him that he in Washington would plead for a SDU. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Beck-Friis to Dahlman. Febr. 2 1949.
15. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Letter Boheman to Undén, Febr. 22 1949.
16. That was also the impression of Hägglöf. See ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Tel. 987. Hägglöf to Foreign Office Stockholm, Febr. 14 1949. Hägglöf got that idea because of the questions that Reventlov had asked Lange. The latter had got new hope because of Lange's plea for a SDU in Washington but Lange's answer to Reventlov shattered that hope immediately: The rejection of weapon aid by the West should compel the Storting to choose the Atlantic way.
17. TEA. F VIII : 2 . Memorandum of conversation with Lange in the Storting, September 17 1963. Lennart Forsman.
18. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Tel.15 Hägglöf to Foreign Office, Stockholm Febr. 2 1949.
19. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Tel.15. Hägglöf to Foreign Office Stockholm, Febr. 2 1949.
20. TEA. F VIII : Vol. 36 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 -1949, pp. 61 and 59. For an account of the meeting with Acheson see also FRUS, 1949, Vol. IV p. 89. Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State. Washington, Febr. 9 1949. For Boheman's report: ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Telegram Boheman nr. 29 to FO Stockholm, Febr. 9 1949.

21. ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Memorandum by Undén, Febr. 2 1949.
22. TEA. F VIII : Vol. 36 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948 -1949, p. 59.
23. TEA. F VIII : Vol. 36 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949.  
Lundestad, 1977, pp. 155 -168. One of the reasons was that some new policymakers had been appointed at State Department after the new inauguration of the Truman government.  
See also Chapter 6.3.
24. ASFO. HP Vol. 986 Memorandum by Undén, Febr. 2 1949.
25. TEA. F: VIII : 1 Vol. 386. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949. p. 38, note 3.
26. AHM.Domö Samling. Redogörelse avgiven till utrikesnämnden 1950, No. 8. p. 8.
27. AHM. Domö Samling. Redogörelse avgiven till utrikesnämnden 1950, No. 38, p. 8.
28. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Dardel to Undén. Febr. 22 1949. See also Nikolaj Petersen "Danish and Norwegian Alliance Policies 1948-1949: A comparative analysis" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1979, pp. 193- 210. and Clausen, 1984, pp. 79-107.
29. AHM. Domö Samling. Redogörelse avgiven till utrikesnämnden 1950, No. 38, p. 8.
30. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 50. Erlander added however that Hedtoft was "always too optimistic". But see for Erlander's view on Hedtoft also Chapter 7.4.
31. AHM. Domö Samling. Final Report of the Scandinavian Defence Committee, Febr. 14 1949.
32. AHM. Domö Samling. Final Report of the Scandinavian Defence Committee, Febr. 14 1949.  
See for the view on Denmark also Chapter 5.4.
33. UPD. 9-05-1948.
34. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 50. Also Undén did, according to Erlander, not believe that the risks would increase because of a pact with Denmark.  
That statement cannot be confirmed with documents of Undén on the SDDU which I have researched.
35. Möller, 1986, p. 351.
36. UPD. 1-03-1949.
37. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Memorandum by Sverker Åström, Febr. 22 1949.

38. ASFO. HP Vol. 986. Letter of Helge Jung to the Ministry of Defence Jan. 1 1949. See also HP Vol. 988 Memorandum by Helge Jung, Febr 22 1949.
39. See also Möller, 1986, p. 351.
40. TEA. F VIII: 1 Vol. 365. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, pp. 63-64. (Letter of Helge Jung to Erlander. Febr. 22 1949)
41. See Chapter 6.4.
42. TEA. Vol. 365 VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.64. See also TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 52.
43. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Memorandum by Undén, March 1 1949.
44. TEA. Vol. 365 VIII: 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p.64. See also TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 52. See for Erlander and Ohlin also Chapter 6.4.
45. See Chapter 6.4.
46. TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 53.
47. Ibidem. See also ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Memorandum by Undén, Sept. 16 1949.
48. TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 56, November 18 1949.
49. See Clausen, 1984, pp.84-102.
50. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Letter of Hägglöf to Dahlman, Stockholm Foreign Office, Febr. 16 1949.
51. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Memorandum of Conversation with Hankey by Hägglöf Febr. 2 1949.
52. TEA. F VIII : 1 Vol. 365. Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 60.
53. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Letter of Hägglöf to Undén. April 21 1949.
54. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Letter Hägglöf to Undén. June 30 1949.
55. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Memorandum concerning a report of Hägglöf. Febr. 26 1949.
56. TEA. F VIII : 1 Vol. 365) Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 59. See also p. 60.
57. See Chapter 5.5 and Chapter 6.2.
58. See Chapter 6.3.
59. TEA. F VIII : 1 Vol. 365) Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 61. Pressreports are available at the Foreign Office in Stockholm.

60. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Letter Boheman to Undén, Febr. 2 1949.

61. ASFO. HP Vol. 987. Letter Boheman to Undén, Febr. 14 1949.

62. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Letter Boheman to Undén, Febr. 22 1949.

The growing understanding for a SDU had according to Boheman began in October-November. Boheman was appointed in Washington in August of that year (1948). See Chapter 6.2

63. Geir Lundestad "USA, skandinavisk försvarsförbund og Halvard Lange: En revurdering" in: *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 139-173.

64. See for the debate *Internasjonal Politikk* 1976-1977. Pharo. H. Ø. (1976: 4) "Det nordatlantiske samarbeid og Norge, 1948-1949"; Lundestad, Geir. (1977: 1) "USA, skandinavisk forsvarsforbund og Halvard Lange: En revurdering"; Lundestad, Geir. (1977: 2) "Det nordatlantiske samarbeid og Norge, 1948-1949"; Lundestad, Geir (1977: 3) "USA, skandinavisk forsvarsforbund og Halvard Lange: Sluttreplik"; Eriksen, K.E. (1977: 2) "Nato, Norden og 'den utro tjener' Halvard Lange"; Eriksen, K.E. (1977) "Nato, Norden og 'den otro tjener' Halvard Lange. Sluttreplik".

65. See Helge Pharo, "The Cold War in Norwegian and International Historical Research" in: *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1985, Vol. 10 nr. 3. pp.163-189.

66. See note 64.

Striking is also the example of misunderstanding between Undén and Lange in Paris. See Chapter 5.5.

67. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Beck-Friis to Undén, March 9 1949.

68. ARAB. TEA F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 7 (11.5.1948).

p. 37 (25.01.49). Also p.2 (16.2.1948) and p.29 (9.01.1949). On October 31 1948 is Gerhardsen about on the Swedish line.(p.13)

In our private conversation of March 4 1985 Erlander described Gerhardsen as he had done all the time. Irresolute and doubtful.

The picture of Gerhardsen must according to Erling Bjøl in the Danish paper *Politiken* (10-10-1985), be revised after the publication of Lie, Haakon. *Skjebneår, 1945-1950*.

69. UPD. 3-5-1948; 10-05-1948; 18-05-1948; 21-12-1948; 24-12-1948; 28-01-1949. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, May 8 1948.

70. UPD. 27-12-1948. Of course there were. Gerhardsen was the one most responsible for the DNA, which was split because of the SDU question.

71. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Letter Johan Beck Friis to Undén, March 9 1949.

See for Beck-Friis' view on Lange and his working for an Atlantic Pact also Chapter 5.5. *passim*.

72. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Beck-Friis to Undén, March 9 1949.

73. *Ibidem*.

74. ASFO. HP Vol. 983. Letter Beck-Friis to Undén, September 1 1948. See for Beck-Friis' suspiciousness also Chapter 5.3. Beck-Friis distrusted the intentions of Lange from the very beginning. And so did Undén.

75. ASFO. HP Vol. 985. Report by Beck-Friis, Jan. 4 1949.

76. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Memorandum by Undén, March 1 1949.

77. UPD. 5 and 6-01-1949.

78. ASFO. HP Vol. 988 Memorandum of a conversation with Svenningsen by Undén, March 1 1949.

79. ARAB. TEA F VIII :1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 63. Also his SDU memoirs (att ARAB) confirm that Erlander did put no confidence in Lange's intentions: ARAB. TEA F VIII : 1 passim. For "Lange's day of triumph": p.37. See also Erlander, 1973, p. 390. Through his speech in Copenhagen Lange had blown up the SDU.

80. Erlander in private conversation. March 4 1985. At that occasion Erlander said that he considered *Hauge* most responsible for the failure. Not Lange. Erlander dated Lange's orientation towards the West in the summer of 1948, "may be even during the March 'crisis' 1948." TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 41. See also Chapter 5.5. "Copenhagen and Oslo".

81. Erlander, 1973, p.362.

82. ARAB. TEA F VII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 42 (31-01-1949).

83. ASFO. HP Vol. 985 Telegram Boheman to FO Stockholm. January 4 1949.

84. ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Boheman to Undén. Report of Lange's visit to Washington. February 12 1949. For Boheman's report: ASFO. HP Vol. 987 Boheman to Undén. Report of Lange's visit to Washington, February 12 1949.

85. Hägglöf, 1973, pp. 202-206. Already in October many Norwegians have chosen for the West. TEA. Vol 365. F VIII : 1 Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 28. See also Chapter 5.5.

86. ASFO. HP Vol 988. Johan Beck-Friis to Undén, March 9 1949.  
UPD 3-5-1948; 28-5-1948.

87. Erlander, 1973, p. 384. During our private conversation of March 4 1985 Erlander even considered Hauge, and not Lange, most responsible for the failure.

88. ARAB, TEA VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarförbund, p. 29 (Jan, 9 1949).  
See also p.56 (18-11-1949) Hauge and Lange, wrote Erlander "were kidding us (..) during the defence negotiations"



89. See Erlander, 1973, pp.378 and 385.

90. UPD. 8-01-1949.

91. Erlander, 1973, p. 378.

92. See chapter 6.2.

93. ARAB. TEA Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949, p. 64. Referred is to a letter of Boheman of Febr. 22 1949.

The author of the document (Försvarsförhandlingarna, 1948-1949), prof. Carlgren, remarks that the here mentioned letter of Boheman with regard to the failure seems to be of particular interest.

94. Krister Wahlbäck "Norden och blockuppdelningen 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, Häfte B 1973, pp. 4-92 and Wahlbäck "USA i Skandinavien 1948-49" in: *Internationella Studier*, 1976, No. 5. pp. 192-198.

See also Nikolaj Pedersen "Danish and Norwegian Alliance Policies 1948-1949: A comparative analysis" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1979, pp. 193-210 and Skodvin, 1971, p 22-23.

95. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948.

96. Nikolaj Pedersen "Danish and Norwegian Alliance Policies 1948-1949: A comparative analysis" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1979, pp. 193-210 See also Niels Jørgen Haagerup's Kommentarer til Geir Lundestad in *Internasjonal Politikk*, 1977, pp. 336-337.

97. TEA. F VIII:1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, pp.13-14.

98. TEA. F VIII : 1 Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, p. 34 For Hedtoft's "double play" p.14 (1.11.1948).

99. See for instance Chapter 5.5 and Chapter 6.2.

100. Erlander noted in his Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund, (pp. 13, 10-20-1948) that Reventlov in London had assured Orme Sargent that the British government could not induce Stockholm to take a more western oriented stand but that Copenhagen and Oslo where able to do so as long as they (US and UK) did not intervene with the Danish-Norwegian efforts. This was interpreted by Erlander as an endeavor of Hedtoft to move Sweden into a Western bloc. Erlander also remarks (ibidem p. 13) that he had been suspicious about Hedtoft's intentions before.

Clausen (1984) confirms Hedtoft's démarches (unfortunately he does not give his sources) but he also adds that it might have been a part of Hedtoft's tactic to prevent US and English intervention in the SDU negotiations.( p. 85.)

It is a problem that there are still few Danish sources available.

Erlander's feelings of sympathy and antipathy appear to have been rather strong and accordingly have played a (sometimes too dominant) role in his opinion about people. Compare for instance his utterances about Ohlin. His pro- and contra- feelings have also been subject for change. In his Minnesanteckningar Nordiskt Försvarsförbund (p. 4 April 17 1948) for instance he wrote that Hedtoft in his foreign policy was even more Swedish than Danish.

On November 2 1949 he accused Hedtoft of an "almost Sweden- hostile attitude". After the failure in Oslo he called Rasmussen Hedtoft and also Gerhardsen "desperate" (p. 41 and 42). Undén on his turn seemed not have had doubts about the faithfulness of Hedtoft.

101. Nikolaj Pedersen "Danish and Norwegian Alliance Policies 1948-1949: A comparative analysis" in: *Cooperation and Conflict*, 1979, pp. 193-210.

102. See Nikolaj Petersen in: Erling Ladewig Petersen, 1984, p. 20.

103. ASFO. HP Vol. 988. Dardel to Undén, February 28 1949.

104. ASFO. HP Vol. 987. Tel. Stockholm Foreign Office to embassies in London, Paris and Washington on Norway's policy, Febr. 18 1949.

105. See Chapter 5.4.

106. Also Grethe Varnø "The United States, Norway and the Atlantic pact, 1948-1949" in: *Scandinavian Studies*, 1978, No. 2, pp.150-176 concludes that the personal attitudes of the principal actors played a dominant role.

## **Chapter 8: The American Embargo Policy and Swedish Neutrality.**

1. For the embargo policy see Adler-Karlsson, 1968 and 1970 and Ellings, 1985. This paragraph is for the greater part based on those sources. Literature on economic warfare is still very limited.

2. See for instance Medlicott, 1952 and 1959, *passim*.

3. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, p. 23.

4. See Chapter 3.

5. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, pp. 67-69.

6. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, p.76. "This agreement is reported to contain a declaration of intent from the Swedish side concerning the rules which the Swedish government intended to apply on the export and transshipment of goods included in the CoCom lists, and in return for this declaration a promise from the American side to limit the activities of the American diplomats in Stockholm in this field."

7. See Chapter 2.6 and 8.3.

8. Adler-Karlsson, 1968, pp.76-77.

9. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683 Report of the sub-committee on the question of Sweden and Switzerland. Secret. CoCom doc. 176/21. 26 October 1950.

10. FRUS, 1948, Vol. IV p. 587.

11. See Chapter 2.

12. ASFO. HP 2683. Hans Beck-Friis to Hammarskjöld (in Paris), October 13 1948.
13. ASFO. HP 2683 Hans Beck-Friis to Hammarskjöld (in Paris), October 13 1948. Hammarskjöld was asked to inform Undén who was also in Paris and to take good care of his numbered (3) copy.
14. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683. Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis, April 20 1949.
15. ASFO. HP 2683. Memorandum by Undén, December 22 1948.
16. ADFO. ABZ Amb. Wash. P.1-8/49.3 Bespreking op het Minist. des Affaires Etrangères inzake Amerikaanse wensen met betrekking to Westeuropese exporten naar Oost-Europa. 18.01.1949. F.J. Gelderman.
17. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683 Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis, April 20 1949.
18. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683 Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis, April 20 1949.
19. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683 Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis, April 20 1949.
20. ASFO. HP Vol. 2683 Memorandum by Hans Beck-Friis, April 20 1949.
21. FRUS, 1949, Vol.I p. 567. Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, October 13 1949.
22. UPA. L 108: 15 Utrikeshandel och ekonomi. Memorandum by Dag Hammarskjöld, December 12 1949.
23. UPA. L 108: 15 Utrikeshandel och ekonomi. Memorandum by Dag Hammarskjöld, December 12 1949.
24. UPA. L 108: 15 Utrikeshandel och ekonomi. Memorandum by Dag Hammarskjöld, December 12 1949.
25. UPA. L 108:15 Utrikeshandel och ekonomi. Memorandum by Hammarskjöld, September 9 1950.
26. TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum II by Dag Hammarskjöld, October 3 1950.
27. Especially Swedish roller and ballbearings were (for the greater part) via Switzerland smuggled into the Eastern bloc. The US embassy in Stockholm reported "wholesale smuggling" centering around "shipments of roller and ball bearings" NA 660.54244 / 12- 3149. Stockholm to Department of State. 31-12-1949. Other reports confirm this smuggling of roller and ballbearings: ASFO. RA HP 2685. Tel. 8-11-1951, 9-11-1951 and ibidem HP 2684, Boheman to Hammarskjöld, Febr. 2 1951.
28. TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum II by Hammarskjöld, October 3 1950.
29. TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum II by Hammarskjöld, October 3 1950.  
Compare in this respect the view of Erlander and Undén on a strong Sweden as the best and cheapest solution for the West.

30. UPA. L 108:15 Utrikeshandel och ekonomi. Memorandum by Hammarskjöld, September 29 1950.
31. UPA. L 108:15 1 Memorandum by Sverker Åström, September 15 1950.
32. UPA. L 108:15 1 Memorandum by Sverker Åström, September 15 1950.
33. ASFO. HP 2683. Report of the sub-committee on the question of Sweden and Switzerland. Secret. CoCom doc. 176/21, October 26 1950.
34. ASFO. HP 2683. Report of the sub-committee on the question of Sweden and Switzerland. Secret. CoCom doc. 176/21, October 26 1950.
35. ASFO. HP 2683. Report of the sub-committee on the question of Sweden and Switzerland. Secret. CoCom doc. 176/21, October 26 1950.
36. ASFO. HP 2684. Telegram Stockholm (Hammarskjöld) to Bern, Jan. 15 1951.
37. ASFO. HP 2684. Telegram Jan. 28 1951. Stockholm to embassies in London, Paris and Washington .
38. ASFO. HP 2684. Letter Gunnar Hägglöf to Hammarskjöld, Febr. 22 1951.
39. ASFO. HP 2684. Memorandum by Hammarskjöld, March 7 1951.
40. ASFO. HP 2684. Memorandum by Hammarskjöld, March 7 1951.
41. ASFO. HP 2684. Boheman to Hammarskjöld, February 2 1951.
42. ASFO. HP 2684. Memorandum by Ingemar Hägglöf, February 16 1951.
43. ASFO. HP 2685 Letter of Ingemar Hägglöf to Swedish Embassy Washington, (de Besche), June 26 1951.
44. Gunnar Adler-Karlsson "Avsatte USA Jacob Wallenberg? Sverige, neutralitet och Sovjet Embargot" in *Dagens Nyheter*, February 20 1979.
45. For an extensive treatment of this affair see Aalders-Wiebes "Stockholms Enskilda Bank, German Bosch and IG Farben. A short history of cloaking" in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 1985, No. 1. pp. 25-50
46. Oral understandings are usual in such affairs. See Aalders-Wiebes "Stockholms Enskilda Bank, German Bosch and IG Farben. A short history of cloaking" in: *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 1985, No. 1. pp. 25-50
47. ASFO. HP 2684 Swedish Embassy Washington to Foreign Office Stockholm Febr. 2 1951.  
See also TEA. E 1:4 Memorandum II by Hammarskjöld, Oct. 3 1950.
48. Details with complete source references will be made available in the forthcoming book "The Art of Cloaking" by Gerard Aalders and Cees Wiebes.
49. See Chapter 2.5.

50. UPD. 12-09-1946.

51. UPA. L. 108: Vol. 24. Memorandum by R. von Heidenstam, September 12 1946. Beträffande besök hos Hans Excellens Utrikesministern angående rysslandsavtalet.

52. UPA. L. 108: Vol. 24. Memorandum by R. von Heidenstam, September 12 1946. Beträffande besök hos Hans Excellens Utrikesministern angående rysslandsavtalet.

53. UPA. L. 108: Vol. 24. Memorandum by R. von Heidenstam, September 12 1946. Beträffande besök hos Hans Excellens Utrikesministern angående rysslandsavtalet.

54. UPA. L. 108: Vol. 24. Memorandum by R. von Heidenstam, September 12 1946. Beträffande besök hos Hans Excellens Utrikesministern angående rysslandsavtalet.

55. See note 48.

## 9. Conclusions and Epilogue

1. See Chapter 6.4.

2. TEA. F VIII : 2. Circ. Nr. 32, March 8 1949. Signed by Undén and send to all embassies.

3. TEA. F VIII : 2. Circ. Nr. 32, March 8 1949. Signed by Undén and send to all embassies.

4. The words are Undén's. They reflect Undén's view although not especially applied to this situation: the embargo policy.

5. See Introduction b.

6. The same hold true for Tage Erlander.

7. ASFO. HP Vol. 982. Memorandum by Undén, April 2 1948. For my treatment of this document see Chapter 5.4. See also Chapter 6.6.

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**PRIVATE COLLECTIONS**

Ivar Anderson papers (IVA), Stockholm  
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 Undén Private Archives (UPA), Stockholm

**INTERVIEWS**

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## SAMENVATTING.

### DE ZWEEDSE NEUTRALITEIT IN DE KOUDE OORLOG, 1945-1949.

#### Introductie.

De vraag waarom Zweden geen partij heeft gekozen in de opkomende Koude Oorlog is tot dusverre nooit bevredigend beantwoord. Studies over het onderwerp zijn zeer schaars en maken bovendien slechts in uiterst geringe mate gebruik van Zweedse bronnen. De voornaamste reden daarvoor was dat de Zweedse overheidsarchieven niet voor onderzoek toegankelijk waren.

Voor dit proefschrift kon echter wél gebruik worden gemaakt van die bronnen. Als eerste onderzoeker verkreeg ik toegang tot de archieven van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken te Stockholm. Ook kreeg ik toestemming om de privé archieven en dagboeken van zowel de toenmalige Minister President Tage Erlander als zijn Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, Östen Undén, de architect van de naoorlogse Zweedse buitenlandse politiek, te benutten. Tevens ben ik in de gelegenheid geweest om diverse prominente politici uit de bewuste periode, waaronder Erlander, te interviewen. Ook werden ten behoeve van mijn onderzoek de archieven van de Zweedse politieke partijen ontsloten. Tenslotte heb ik een groot aantal kranten en periodieken over de periode 1945-1949 systematisch doorgenomen en verwerkt.

In de introductie wordt een schets gegeven van de achtergronden en geschiedenis van de Zweedse neutraliteit die tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog meer pragmatisch dan neutraal bleek. De ervaringen uit die periode oefenden grote invloed uit op de naoorlogse buitenlandse politiek. Hoe weinig de neutraliteitsinvulling van 1940-1945 door o.a. de Scandinavische buurlanden, Denemarken en Noorwegen, werd gewaardeerd bleek uit hun verzoek aan Zweden om het woord neutraliteit niet meer te gebruiken.

In de introductie wordt ook nader ingegaan op het begrip Koude Oorlog, waarom de periode 1945-1949 gekozen is en de methode van benadering en onderzoek.

Het proefschrift tracht een antwoord te geven op de centrale vraag of de neutraliteit in de turbulente naoorlogse jaren ooit ter discussie heeft gestaan, zowel binnen de regering als binnen de politieke partijen.

### **1. Het VN lidmaatschap.**

De discussie over de compatibiliteit van neutraliteit met een lidmaatschap van een internationale volkerenorganisatie werd in feite al in 1920 gevoerd toen de Volkerenbond werd opgericht. Van grote weerstand zoals die in 1920 tegen het lidmaatschap bestond was er in 1946, toen toetreding tot de VN ter discussie stond, geen sprake. De Zweden zagen in het functioneren van de Veiligheidsraad een garantie voor hun neutraliteit. De Raad besliste over sancties tegen landen maar kon dat alleen doen als zeven van de elf tellende Veiligheidsraad leden daartoe besloten. Bovendien moesten de Supermachten, die permanent zitting in de Veiligheidsraad hebben, zich unaniem voor sanctie uitspreken. Op die wijze zou Zweden nooit onverwacht of ongewild aan de zijde van het Oost- of het Westblok kunnen geraken.

### **2. Tussen Oost en West. De Krediet- en handelsovereenkomst met de Sovjet Unie.**

Het krediet aan de Sovjets ter waarde van 1 miljard Zweedse kronen zorgde voor grote onrust in de binnenlandse politiek en in de media. Toch durfde geen der politieke partijen tegen deze overeenkomst van 1946 te stemmen die al tijdens de oorlog was voorbereid: in de Tweede Wereldoorlog werd Zweden geregeerd door een coalitie waarin alle partijen, behalve de communistische, vertegenwoordigd waren.

De eerste tekenen van de Koude Oorlog hadden inmiddels ook Zweden bereikt. De VS protesteerden middels een nota tegen de Zweeds-Russische overeenkomst.

Het krediet werd een mislukking in die zin dat de Sovjets slechts de helft opnamen. In hoofdstuk acht wordt nader op die mislukking ingegaan en in verband gebracht met de Amerikaanse embargopolitiek tegen het Oostblok.

### **3. De Marshallhulp.**

De Marshallhulp stond ter discussie omdat de VS via die hulp invloed zouden kunnen uitoefenen op de politiek van Stockholm. Dat Zweden toch mee deed had een aantal redenen: Zweden was gebaat bij de wederopbouw van de Europese economie, het importeerde belangrijke grondstoffen uit de VS en bovendien kon het de groeiende invloed van Washington in Europa niet negeren. Acceptatie was een kwestie van goodwill.

De Amerikaanse sympathie voor Zweden was al tijdens de wereldoorlog

drastisch verminderd vanwege de Zweedse opstelling. De kredietovereenkomst met de Sovjet Unie had de relatie nog verder vertroebeld.

De hulp die Zweden in de vorm van een bescheiden lening accepteerde moet dan ook voornamelijk als een verzoenend, symbolisch gebaar worden gezien

#### **4. Toenemende spanningen in 1948.**

De communistische machtsovername in Tsjechoslowakije en het Sovjet voorstel aan Finland om een vriendschapsverdrag te sluiten brachten de gemoederen in Europa hevig in beweging. Zweden hield het hoofd, zeker vergeleken met Noorwegen en Denemarken, opmerkelijk koel. Wel groeide de verontrusting over de houding van Noorwegen dat steeds meer naar het Westen leek over te hellen. Ook de oproep van de Engelse Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken, Ernest Bevin, aan Europa om zich te verenigen werd niet zo krachtig door Oslo van de hand gewezen als Stockholm wel gewenst had.

#### **5, 6 en 7. De Scandinavische Defensie Unie.**

In deze hoofdstukken wordt uitgebreid ingegaan op het voorstel van Undén (3 Mei 1948) aan Denemarken en Noorwegen om een Scandinavische Defensie Unie (SDU) op te richten. Bij de Zweedse regering bestond de vrees dat Noorwegen zich op termijn bij het Westen zou aansluiten. Die eventuele Noorse stap werd als een directe bedreiging voor de Zweedse neutraliteit gezien want als Noorwegen aan de kant van het Westen in een oorlog zou worden meegesleurd, zou de kans van Zweden om buiten dat conflict te blijven gering zijn.

De oprichting van een ongebonden SDU leek de enige mogelijkheid om Noorwegen van de gevreesde stap af te houden. Via de SDU wilde Stockholm a.h.w. haar eigen neutraliteitsopvatting aan geheel Scandinavië opleggen. Van Mei 1948 tot Januari 1949 werden diverse onderhandelingen gevoerd maar in feite waren ze vanaf het begin tot mislukken gedoemd. Noorwegen achtte, met het oog op nationale veiligheid een zekere mate van associatie met het Westen noodzakelijk terwijl Zweden dat juist als het grootste gevaar beschouwde.

Van de kant van het Westen werd er druk op Scandinavië uitgeoefend om toe te treden tot een Atlantisch Pact, de toekomstige Navo. Groot Brittannië was traditioneel hoofdzakelijk in Noorwegen geïnteresseerd. De aanwezigheid

van de Sovjet Unie op de Noorse kusten zou immers een direkte bedreiging voor de UK vormen.

De Amerikaanse belangstelling ging vooral uit naar Denemarken. Dat land zelf was nauwelijks van enige betekenis voor de VS maar het bezat wel Groenland waar de Amerikanen sinds de Tweede Wereldoorlog vliegbases bezaten die voor Washington van enorm strategisch belang waren. Denemarken voelde het meest voor de Zweedse optie, een neutrale SDU, desnoods zonder Noorwegen. Zweden weigerde echter om samen met Denemarken een militair verbond te vormen. In Noorwegen bestond er binnen parlement en regering een groep die nog twijfelde over de wenselijkheid van een samengaan met het Westen. Hun uiteindelijke beslissing zou doorslaggevend zijn voor zowel de Noorse als de Deense koers. Als Oslo voor het Westen zou kiezen had Kopenhagen geen andere keuze dan het Noorse voorbeeld te volgen. Geïsoleerde neutraliteit werd niet verantwoord geacht en Zweden was absoluut niet geïnteresseerd in een Deens-Zweedse militair verbond.

Zowel van de zijde van Stockholm als van Washington en Londen begon het touwtrekken om de Noorse gunst. Stockholm hoopte dus een onafhankelijke SDU van de grond te krijgen, de Anglo-Amerikanen op de associatie van Noorwegen en Denemarken met het Atlantisch Pact.

De druk op de Scandinavische landen was aanzienlijk. Het grote verschil tussen Oslo en Stockholm was dat de Noren, in tegenstelling tot de Zweden, de Brits-Amerikaanse pressie serieus namen. De houding van Denemarken speelde in dit verloop nauwelijks een rol. Door Moskou werd nauwelijks druk op Stockholm uitgeoefend. Undén werd als een garantie voor de neutraliteit, die het Kremlin het liefst gehandhaafd wilde zien, beschouwd.

De positie van Finland speelde in de Zweedse overwegingen nauwelijks een rol hoewel naar de publieke opinie toe het tegendeel werd gesuggereerd.

De Zweedse militaire top voelde het meest voor aansluiting bij het Westen. Het gros van de media (behalve de belangrijkste liberale krant *Dagens Nyheter*) steunde de regeringspolitiek en hetzelfde kan gezegd worden van de politieke partijen. Alleen de communistische partij (en de door haar gecontroleerde media) prefereerde handhaving van de oude neutraliteitskoers.

Uiteindelijk zouden Noorwegen, en dus ook Denemarken, zich bij de Navo aansluiten.



## **8. De Amerikaanse embargopolitiek en de Zweedse neutraliteit.**

De Amerikaanse pogingen om Stockholm officieel te laten deelnemen in hun embargopolitiek tegen het Oostblok mislukten hoewel de Zweden in de praktische uitvoering van hun politiek wel heel ver met het embargo meegingen. Zweedse bedrijven werden door de VS onder druk gezet om mee te doen op straffe van stopzetting van leveranties van grondstoffen en technologie.

Het is aannemelijk dat diverse industrieën, op grond van hun activiteiten in de Tweede Wereldoorlog ten gunste van Nazi-Duitsland, door de VS onder druk werden gezet. In eerste instantie bood de reeds genoemde kredietovereenkomst met de Sovjet Unie daartoe een goed handvat omdat quota, leveringsdata etc. precies bekend waren en daarom gecontroleerd konden worden.

### **Conclusies en Epiloog.**

In de onderzochte periode heeft binnen parlement en regering de neutraliteit nooit ter discussie gestaan. Toch was die neutraliteit niet geheel ondubbelzinnig. Pragmatisme, ingegeven door nationale belangen, speelde een grote rol in de uitvoering van hun buitenlandse politiek. Ook is het duidelijk dat het Zweedse vertrouwen in neutraliteit in hoge mate historisch werd bepaald (met name door de Tweede Wereldoorlog) maar ook de persoonlijke opstelling van Undén en Erlander vormden een factor van betekenis. De Koude Oorlogs mentaliteit had verrassend weinig invloed op dit regeringsduo. Beiden wantrouwden zowel Oost als West.

De vraag is nu hoe lang Zweden de verlokkingen van de EEG van 1992 kan weerstaan. Toetreding zou het begin van een definitief afscheid van haar neutraliteit betekenen.

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## THESES

1. It may be considered undesirable that Sweden will ever be forced to prove the ultimate reliability of its neutrality because this would demand a new total war. A nuclear war, on the other hand, would make the test superfluous.
2. As long as citizens of neutral states are not hampered by international and national laws to deal with warring parties and accordingly are able to benefit at least one of the belligerents, the concept of neutrality is more fiction than reality.
3. The Swedish (voluntary) participation in the US embargo policy may not be considered a departure from neutrality, as long as it has not clearly been proved that it was more than a coincidental synchronization of the Swedish policy with the demands of the USA.
4. As long as the nationality of the submarines violating Swedish territorial waters cannot be established with more accuracy it would be preferable to refer to those phantom ships, in analogy with UFO, as USMO: Unidentified Sub Marine Objects.
5. The thesis that the Nato preserved peace in Europe is as untenable as the theory that the Warsaw Pact threatened it (or the other way round, depending on one's domicile in Europe). The only possible conclusion is that peace was preserved. The question if this was due to or despite the existence of the pacts remains for ever unsolved.
6. *Presupposed* effects on ideological adversaries, mutual prejudices and distrust are the main ingredients of the Cold War.
7. Good personal relations between the leaders of the Super Powers produce more positive effects on disarmament conferences in a single day than the usual reduction talks in a decade.
8. Neutral states in wartime are indispensable: they provide the various intelligence services of the belligerents with a safe haven from where activities can be conducted and where informal contacts between the enemies can be maintained.
9. The acceptance of Marshall Aid provided the US with so much influence over the economy of Sweden that the phrase "non-alignment" is an inadequate description of the factual situation.
10. Proposal for a Swedish national motto: East, West, Neutrality Best.







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